JULY 1920.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

No. 1257

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THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLICATION CO.,
SARA FISHER, PROP.
249 WEST 13TH STREET.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

Entered as second-class matter, July 3, 1917, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879

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50
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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCLVII. JULY 1920. Vol. CCVIII.

THE SALVING OF THE *ULIDIA*.

BY DESMOND YOUNG.

I.

The *Ulidia* was a typical "three-island" tramp steamer —3081 tons gross; 330′ × 42′ × 21′, built by Redhead's at Shields in 1903: so much was to be gathered from Lloyd's Register.

For thirteen years she had plodded round the world at eight or nine knots on her lawful occasions, carrying her five thousand tons or so of cargo—a good honest ship for her owners, and a comfortable ship for her officers and crew. It is to be supposed that in those thirteen years she had had her share of the trials and vicissitudes common to all ships; but for me her history began in September 1916 with a sheaf of telegrams in a dusty file at the Salvage Section of the Admiralty—a file entitled "Details of wrecks on the Murman Coast and in the White Sea," which I read in April 1919.

It was not one of those "all-recording files" of which it is said—

> "Every question man can raise,
> Every phrase of every phase
> Of that question is on record in the files."

Indeed, the "details" which it professed to give were meagre enough.

From the telegrams and reports, however, it appeared that the *Ulidia* in September 1916, while loading timber at Soroka, on the south-western shores of the White Sea, had parted her cables in bad weather, and had gone ashore on a patch of rocks in the middle of Soroka Bay. Attempts to lighten her by discharging the cargo already

loaded into barges succeeded only in putting her in a worse position, since those responsible omitted to lay out anchors to prevent her driving further up on the rocks as she was lightened.

The Russian ice-breaker service from Archangel then took a hand, and, doubtless with the best intentions, made fast two powerful ice-breakers to the stern-post and endeavoured to tow off the vessel, now damaged and partly filled with water.

Beyond carrying away the stern-post and rudder they achieved nothing, and returned to Archangel. This was the extent of the salvage operations, and there the ship still lay. Two winters in the ice, with the water rising and falling with the tide in the engine-room and stokehold and all four holds, two years' exposure to the winter gales in the White Sea, two years' straining and pounding upon the rocks, to say nothing of a passing Bolshevik occupation of Soroka, could hardly be expected to have improved her condition.

Yet, from the first time I read her name, I felt a premonitory interest in her, though I did not realise that for the next six months she was to be a constant preoccupation, an obsession, and often a nightmare to me.

For one thing, various Russians in Archangel, whose names were afterwards familiar enough, but then were only a jumble of consonants at the end of a telegram, seemed very anxious to buy her as she lay—though, with remarkable unanimity, the prices they offered never rose above about eight thousand pounds.

At the time I knew nothing of Russians — an ignorance which I was not long to enjoy; but it needed no great discernment to see that any one prepared to pay eight thousand pounds for a ship in such a position and such a place must have some reasonable hope of refloating her, and if she could be refloated, her value, at current prices, was nearer to eighty thousand pounds than eight.

The Admiralty Salvage Section had themselves done the majority of the possible salvage cases in home waters during the war; but North Russia had necessarily been beyond their beat, although casualties on those unfriendly and often unlighted and badly charted coasts were only too frequent, even before the German submarines came round the North Cape into the Arctic Ocean and thence down to the White Sea. Information as to the actual position and condition of ships wrecked up there was difficult to obtain; for cables were delayed and mutilated, while the Naval and Transport Staffs at Archangel and Murmansk were sufficiently occupied during 1918—when Admiral Kemp and General Ironside were holding on to hundreds of miles of the most desolate country in the world with a few hundred "categery" men —Marines, Serbians, French,

disloyal Finns, and dejected Russians,—without concerning themselves with so much of a "side show" as Salvage.

Moreover, ships do not, as a rule, choose the most accessible places to go ashore, even on the British coasts. But on the British coasts it is only a question of a few miles from the nearest town in a car, or a few miles from the nearest port in a tug-boat.

In Russia distances are measured by days. That the information in the file was not exhaustive was therefore disappointing but not surprising, and we soon came to the conclusion that the best course was to go and see on the spot what salvage work there was to be done.

The Admiralty and the Ministry of Shipping were ready to encourage British enterprise, for they had a natural disinclination to dispose of what might still be valuable property for a few thousand pounds to Russians who were, so far, the only prospective buyers, and would not discuss salvage except on the basis that all their expenses should be paid, whatever the results. It was therefore with every kind of official pass, and with the official list of wrecks in my pocket (on which the *Ulidia* was marked with blue pencil as one of the "possibles"), that I left Tilbury on May 31st, 1919, in the *Prætorian*, which, in addition to Cæsar and his prospective fortunes, carried General Sadleir-Jackson and his brigade staff, and the 46th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, the vanguard of the North Russian Relief Force, whose adventures readers of 'Maga' have followed during the past few months.

At Murmansk—a village of wooden huts built in mud and inhabited by mosquitoes — I met a representative from the Admiralty Salvage Section, together with a Russian salvage expert, Captain G., with thirty years' experience in the Baltic. After an evening's discussion, we came to the conclusion that the *Ulidia* was the first ship to inspect.

The next evening (June 14th), we took the train from Murmansk for Soroka, *vid* Kandalaksha and Kem.

The railway had only recently been finished, and, but for the war, it is doubtful whether it would ever have been finished at all, in view of the appalling death-rate from fever of the labourers employed upon its construction. Chinese had been tried, but these died faster even than the native Russians; and it was not until practically unlimited supplies of German and Austrian prisoners were available, who, as they died, could be buried alongside, or incorporated in, the permanent way, that any real progress was made.

It was six months since the armistice, but some of the survivors of these prisoners were still about; whether because they had no means of returning home, or from some incomprehensible preference for Murmansk, I did not discover.

One large and typical Boche was cook to a lance-corporal and three o.r. (M.F.P.) who lived on the quay, and appeared to be both a good cook and a popular member of the mess.

The function of the lance-corporal and his command was to prevent the looting of cargoes of ships in the port, or the sale of them by the crews to the local Russian. As one instance of which I heard was the disappearance of the entire cargo (general) of a 5000 ton steamer in about a fortnight, their job can have been no sinecure.

For two days we travelled through scenery like that of Canada—pine forests with broad rivers tumbling headlong through them, over very temporary wooden bridges and a track which, having been built largely on mud previously frozen and now thawing, was none too secure, and reached Soroka on the third day.

In this I gathered, from a snatch of conversation overheard, we were lucky.

Young Bill, just out, was complaining of the length of the journey and the tediousness of trains.

"Three days," said old Bill, who had apparently settled down in Russia as he had settled down previously in Flanders, and spoke the language with the same facility—"Three days, that's —— dobra, that is. Why, we took ten when we come down. The Russki engine-driver went off home and got married half way, and never came back for a week."

In this he was more true to type than another Russki, whose history I heard from a corporal in the Royal Sussex, thrice wounded,—in France, Gallipoli, and Palestine,—who ran the canteen car up and down between Murmansk and the front line near Onega, and was very friendly because he lived in Fulham, while I live in Chelsea.

"We had a Russki carpenter once," he said, "when we were cutting down trees behind the line for roads, and nothing we could do would make him work. He didn't seem to have any heart for it. Then some one suggested dressing him up in khaki and putting three stripes on him. It had an effect like magic. After that we couldn't stop him. He would go on for sixteen and more hours on end, and I don't know how many trees he wouldn't cut down. In fact," he concluded unemotionally, "we had to kill him when we come away—to save the forest."

Soroka is a little fishing village dating back to the twelfth century—a place of banishment in the days of the old régime for those suspects who were not considered dangerous enough for Siberia.

It is built on either side of a shallow rocky river. On the opposite side from the railway station is the sawmill—Peter Belaieff's—which, with Stewart's on the far side of the bay, provided the main industry of the place, and, incidentally, the reason of the *Ulidia's* presence there.

The two portions of the

town were connected by a ferry service of canoes managed and propelled by the local flappers, who must, like many of their kind at home, have hoped that a war which brought their average earnings up to about eighty roubles (£1) a day would continue for ever.

They conducted across odd British, French, Americans, Italians, and Serbians, with good-humour, but without curiosity, and no over-payment, however large, could extort from them any expression of gratitude or even surprise.

I shall always remember my first sight of the *Ulidia*. She was lying about four miles from the shore, and normally little more than her masts and funnels would have been visible from the beach. But when the sun shone, as it did on the day we arrived in Soroka, by some curious effect of mirage she appeared to be floating in air, every detail of her distinct, just above the surface of the sea.

From the sawmill we chartered a tug and went out to her. The channel into Soroka would only allow of small tugs going up it, and then not at dead low water. Big ships had to load their timber from lighters a couple of miles out in the bay. Later I grew to know this channel, and I am one of what is, I suppose, a limited number of people who could find their way successfully up and down it. Whether this accomplishment is likely again to prove of value to me I do not know. I trust not.

The channel was marked, with a charming rustic simplicity, with the branches of trees stuck in the sand. Trees with a certain variety of leaf had to be left on the port hand, those with another species on the starboard—so that, as an aggrieved naval officer remarked to me after he had piled up a picket-boat through disregarding these marks and trying to come in by the chart at full speed, "You've got to be a —— botanist as well as a —— navigator in this place."

The branches were, of course, carried away by the ice every winter and replaced by the oldest inhabitant every spring, as nearly as possible in the same place.

It surprised me when our tug bumped continually over banks and shoal all the way down the channel, but it caused Belaieff's manager no concern; and I learned later that these bumps were a part of the daily routine, which explained another local custom, that of ordering spare propellers for the tug-boats by the dozen.

There can be nothing, I think, so pathetic, or which so gives the effect of loneliness, desolation, and decay, as a wrecked and deserted ship. It is the most melancholy sight in the world, more melancholy than overgrown gardens or uninhabited cities.

We came alongside the *Ulidia* and climbed up a boat-fall. Our footsteps sounded

hollow on her iron decks, on which the rust was thick. The hatches were gone, and, looking down the holds, one could see the ice, which had disappeared from the sea outside, still floating in the dark body of the ship in huge lumps which the sun could not reach to melt. The engine-room and stokehold were more gloomy still, as one peered down through the gratings and saw the level of the water showing black and oily among the rusting masses of machinery. There was no trace of life aboard, save the mosquitoes rising in clouds from the piles of old rope. There had been a watchman the first winter, but the darkness and the ice grinding against the sides of the ship, and the water moving about in her empty holds, had been too much even for Russian nerves, and he had left.

Everything portable, down to the brass handles of the cabin doors, had been stolen by the natives who had come across the ice in the winter from Soroka.

None the less, in the rake of the masts and funnels there was something of life, and she looked too good a ship to be left there until the ice and the gales should destroy her. Then again I felt (or perhaps I only feel now that I felt) a premonition that our hopes and interests were to be bound up with hers.

More important, however, than premonitions was the fact that, in spite of the pounding she must have received on the patch of, fortunately, flat rock on which she had lain for over two years, there was no sign of her having broken her back. Stanchions in the holds were, it is true, set up, and there was a perceptible upward bulge in the deck; but a very small strain down below is sufficient to show considerable indications above, and, had the ship been broken or very seriously strained, there would have been much more evidence of it. Moreover, though every compartment in the ship had water in it, observations showed that they were not all equally damaged, and that some at least of the bulkheads must be intact.

The total rise and fall of tide in the White Sea is only about six feet.

In the two after-holds, Nos. 3 and 4, the water only rose and fell eight inches, while it rose and fell six feet outside. This clearly showed that the leak in these compartments was trifling, and that the greater part of the water here was probably rain-water accumulated through the hatches being off. The fore-peak was dry.

In No. 1 the water rose and fell about two feet, while in No. 2 and the engine-room and stockhold it rose and fell equally with the tide. The position was therefore clear enough, even before the diver's examination.

In the ordinary way this would have been a simple case, since the ship would easily have floated with the fore-peak, Nos. 1, 3, and 4 holds

empty, even though there was water in No. 2 and the engine-room and stockhold.

The problem here, however, was not how to give the ship sufficient buoyancy to float, but how to make her light enough to float off the rock. She had been half-loaded when she went ashore, but as the cargo was discharged she had worked farther and farther up on to the rock until it was as if she had gone ashore empty, that is, at her minimum draft, whereas she was now partially loaded with water.

Had there been a big rise and fall of tide it would only have been necessary to make tight and pump out Nos. 1, 3, and 4, where the damage was obviously slight; but with a rise and fall of only six feet it was evident that the engine-room, stokehold, and No. 2 must be emptied also to give the necessary flotation. From the way in which the water rose and fell in these compartments with the tide, it was clear that there was very serious damage (local rumour said that there was a rock through the bottom of the engine-room), and this must somehow be dealt with.

Fine weather could only be expected until the end of August or middle of September. We had therefore very little time, for already it was June 19th.

It was a time for quick decision; but I often wonder whether, had I been able to foresee the hazards and anxiety of the next few months, I should have decided as I did, that we would make the attempt to salve the ship. Another decision had to be made at the same time—whether I should cable to England for our salvage steamer, which was ready to sail with motor- and steam-pumps, pneumatic tools, oxy-acetylene plant, air compressors, and all the rest of the gear necessary for salvage work, and a picked crew; or whether I should listen to the old salvage expert from the Baltic, charter a ship locally, collect pumps, diving gear, &c., and men in Archangel, and do the work with local resources.

This was not so wild an idea as it may seem, for I knew that in Archangel were a number of divers, engineers, &c., who had fled from the Baltic, and had had long experience with Captain G. before the war, and were really good workmen, as the Baltic salvage workers are known to be.

It would be at least a fortnight before our own ship could arrive, and then there was not enough water for her to come close to the wreck. Also, she could not carry as many men as it was obvious we should require, and I knew that the experiment of trying to make English and Russians work alongside each other would be foredoomed to failure. Moreover, there was to be taken into account the dead loss on wages, provisions, and, above all, bunkers, on the voyage to and from England.

I therefore made up my mind to employ Captain G. and local labour. Though I

always had, and still have, a great admiration and even affection for Captain G. himself, it would be hard to say how much I regretted this decision afterwards. The reasons will be apparent enough.

Our decision made, the next step was to get to Archangel as quickly as possible. To any one who knows Russia it will be needless to say that the only boat had left the day before, that no one knew when there would be another boat, or, indeed, believed that there would ever be one. We were told that it would be quite useless to go to Popoff, the port of Kem, which was the port of departure for Archangel, and that even if we determined to go there was no train. I was already a little suspicious of Russia, and therefore made my way to the station, struck up an acquaintance with an American private who was clerk to the R.T.O., and the following day we reached Popoff, to find a steamer just leaving for Archangel. There, two days later, we arrived, and began at once to collect men and plant.

There is a story of Conrad's —'A Smile of Fortune'— which tells how the captain of a ship in a foreign port encountered an inexplicable shortage of the particular kind of bag which he needed imperatively for his loading, as a sequel to a very excusable loss of temper with a certain Mr Jacobus, of how his ship was delayed and he himself reduced to despair and to desperate remedies.

I was not conscious of having insulted any one, excusably or not, and came to the conclusion that the polite but persistent obstruction which I encountered from every Russian with whom I had business in Archangel was either a national characteristic or the result of the intrigues of the various interests which saw the prospect of buying the *Ulidia* for a song fading away from them.

I arranged to charter a tug-boat, and she was promptly requisitioned by the harbour authorities. I engaged men, to find them immediately called up for military service. I wanted to hire a donkey-boiler, and the owner discovered an urgent need for it, though previously it had not been used for months. I tried to book passages in the local steamer to take the men whom I had secured back to Soroka, and was informed by the agents that no accommodation was available, and by the Intelligence Branch that the necessary passes could not be issued.

All this only after long interviews, conducted through an interpreter, and by the end of a week I had formed a hearty dislike of Russians and everything Russian, and particularly of Archangel, which even the lapse of time has not dissipated.

The weather was very hot, and by the time I had made three or four journeys from one end of the interminable Troitzky Prospect to the other in a tram-car crowded with

Russians, I was half inclined to abandon N. Russia and the *Ulidia* for ever.

I remember particularly the Chief Engineer of the Port. He had the unusual reputation of being an honest official, and perhaps deserved it; but he had a passion for conversation, for dockets and minutes and for red tape, which no one in a Government Office in England could hope to rival.

A few months ago the Bolsheviks shot him, I believe, and I am not surprised, for he was an irritating old man.

Fortunately for me, the first person I met when I called at the office of the Principal Naval Transport Officer in Archangel was the D.N.T.O. — Captain Dawes, who was universally known in both services as one of the ablest officers in North Russia, as well as one of the best of fellows.

We had last shared a house together at Portsmouth, and this fact, coupled with a sympathetic dislike of Russians, made him find time to give me invaluable help. The Russian officials were terrified of him, for he had a blunt method of dealing with them to which they were not accustomed. But he had a perfectly marvellous knack of getting things done, for he spared neither himself nor those under him, and it was entirely due to him that we got together the gear and men we wanted, and secured military exemptions and passports.

The small coasting-vessels of the Murman Steamship Co. made more or less regular voyages between Archangel and Onega, Soroka, Kem, Kandalaksha, the ports of the White Sea, and on board one of these the salvage gear (such as it was) was loaded and the salvage party mustered.

The latter consisted of sixty odd men and three or four women. It was the first time I had heard of women on a salvage job, but all Russian ships carry women as cooks. The practice, dietetically, has something to be said for it, though it leads (however unprepossessing the ladies concerned, and these had faces and figures apparently carved hurriedly out of well-seasoned mahogany with a blunt axe) to the troubles which might be expected.

The vessel's sailing was delayed by one of the divers, who, having drunk two bottles of whisky neat in quick succession on the quay, fell off it into the Dwina, and was only rescued with some difficulty and much excitement. Eventually, however, we cast off, towing astern a small steam-launch belonging to Captain G., and astern of that again a ship's lifeboat to serve as a diving boat.

The voyage across the White Sea, in radiant sunshine day and night, was very pleasant, and thirty-six hours after leaving Archangel, on the evening of 1st July, we came to an anchor off Soroka, which we had left ten days before, and boarded the *Ulidia* again.

II.

Accommodation on salvage work is never luxurious. Men sleep and eat where and when they can. But though she may be carrying three or four times her proper complement, there is usually a salvage steamer aboard which the men live.

Our only salvage steamer was a tug—the *Aleida Johanna*—which, after protracted and irritating negotiations by interpreter with the engineer of the port at Archangel and by telegram with his opposite number at Murmansk, we had succeeded in chartering. She, however, was still at Murmansk, and at the best there was not room for more than a dozen men aboard of her.

All hands had therefore to live on board the wreck, which, having been thoroughly looted and deserted for over two years, did not at first sight look very habitable. But no Russian, given an axe and sufficient timber, would be homeless for more than a day; and on the morning after our arrival the ship was comfortable enough, the saloon and cabins cleaned out for us, and the poop and forecastle fitted for the men with new doors and double tiers of bunks, which bore an extraordinary family resemblance to those in a German dug-out. Indeed, many of the men, nearly all of whom were from the Baltic, were German in speech and appearance. The majority of them by birth were Letts—good workmen, clean, and studiously polite, with a deference to their employers which, whether it is to be regretted or not, has died out entirely in England. But though capable and industrious, they were of a shifty and violent temper.

"Revy," Captain G. (himself a Lett) would say in his broken English, "rovy, like a dog. A word, and the son kills the father and the father the son. You must keep him in the hand—so—strong—strong. So I keep him all my life." He was to find that the men were now not so easily to be kept "in the hand." Even "the black labour," as he called it, the carpenters and unskilled labourers from Archangel and Soroka itself, were alive to the political changes of the past year or so, and listened the more readily to the one or two agitators on board, and were the more dangerous from their childlike simplicity and entire lack of education.

The first evening they filled the entrance to the saloon to listen to the arrangements with regard to hours and details of work, a proceeding which, though they were respectful enough, aroused Captain G.'s indignation.

"Never have I seen this thing," he exclaimed. "I have him always like a dog treated before in my life." He was the kindest old man, and there is no doubt had considered his men and looked after them well, but he was no believer

in Trade Union methods for Russia.

Our first business, after the men had settled themselves aboard, was to send off the crew for the *Aleida Johanna* by train to Murmansk, and the next to get steam on the wreck. Steam, the life-blood of a ship, to work the winches so that we could lower pumps and gear down into the 'tween-decks, and later to work the pumps themselves.

We had failed to get a donkey-boiler in Archangel, and the ship's donkey-boiler was at the same level as the main boilers, and therefore under water and useless.

I embarked on what I felt to be a fruitless search for a donkey-boiler in Soroka without any great confidence. The railway station and Belaieff's mill were drawn blank, but luck was with us (as on several occasions afterwards), and I found at Stewart's, the mill on the east side of the bay just opposite the wreck, a new boiler which had been intended for a small tug-boat but never fitted.

It was some hundreds of yards from the beach, in a wooden house which had been built round it; it weighed two tons, and the local manager of the mill was very doubtful as to whether we could be allowed to have it, even at the inordinate price he put upon it. However, it was a very short time before the house was taken to pieces, the boiler hoisted on to a barge, towed off to the ship, and got aboard, and the engineers were busy connecting up steam pipes to it.

A certain amount of technicality is unavoidable if one is to follow the story of the next two months, and it is perhaps as well at this point to explain the plan of salvage which the diver's examination and our previous inspection led us to adopt.

The soundings round the ship gave at high-water spring-tides 10 feet forward, 12 feet amidships, and 14 feet aft on the starboard side, which was the side furthest up on the ledge of rock. On the port side there was a foot more forward, 18 inches more amidships, and a couple of feet more aft.

The builders had telegraphed to us that for the vessel to float empty, and with no bunkers, but with ballast tanks full, she would require 7 feet 6 inches forward, 9 feet 6 inches amidships, and 12 feet 6 inches aft. We had not much to spare, therefore, and there was no question of leaving the most severely damaged compartment alone. The vessel must be got into such a condition that all compartments could be pumped practically dry.

The fact that the water only rose and fell a few inches with the tide in the two after-holds (Nos. 3 and 4) showed that these were only slightly damaged. Actually we discovered the principal source of the leakage in No. 4—a rivet out in the side of the tunnel—the first day.

These two holds were therefore left alone until the time

should come to pump them out.

In the engine-room the diver found that three manhole doors were off and had disappeared. Here, doubtless, was the origin of the story of the rock through the bottom of the engine-room, no doubt circulated by the same individual who had removed the doors, and had wished in this way to deter any one else from attempting salvage.

New manhole doors had to be made and fitted.

There was no double bottom in the stokehold, and it was here that we anticipated serious trouble. Fortunately, the divers could find none underneath the boilers; but the bulkhead between the stokehold and No. 2 hold had given way at the bottom, and it was evident that at this point (where the ship was apparently resting on a small ledge of rock slightly above the level of the rest) there was considerable damage.

In No. 2 hold there were a large number of rivets out in the tank top, which was badly set up, the seams of the tank were leaking, and in one place the bottom of the bulkhead between No. 2 and No. 1 holds had given way. In No. 1 hold, as in No. 2, there were numbers of rivets gone, and the seams of the tanks were opened out.

It must be understood that there was never any question of making the ship's bottom water-tight. If she were to float at all she must float on her tank tops. The condition of the bottom we could only guess at, for it was impossible for the diver to get underneath the vessel, sitting flat down on the rock as she was, but we knew that there could be very little of it intact.

The scheme proposed was to build a cement bulkhead, six feet broad by six feet high, inside a wooden box right across the whole width of the ship (42 feet) in the stokehold against the bulkhead between it and No. 2 hold, and another similar bulkhead in No. 2 hold against the other side of the original bulkhead.

These two cement bulkheads would, in fact, constitute at once a new water-tight bulkhead between the stockhold and No. 2 hold, and a patch over the damage to the bottom at this point.

A third cement bulkhead was to be built against the damaged portion of the bulkhead between No. 2 and No. 1 holds.

It was necessary to make these bulkheads six feet high, though it was only the bottom of the ship's bulkhead which was damaged, in order to have sufficient weight of cement on top of the damage to resist the pressure of the water, which would try to force its way in when the ship was pumped out.

It will be appreciated that these bulkheads had to be built by the divers under water.

The method was as follows: The wooden box, or rather wall, was constructed by the carpenters on deck in sections made to fit exactly into each other. It was made of 4-inch

deals, which were fitted as closely as possible and caulked, to make them water-tight. The bottom (where it rested on the tank top) was fitted with a big "pudding" or sausage of canvas filled with hemp for the same purpose.

These sections were weighted and sent down to the diver, who placed them in position six feet away from the ship's bulkhead, until there was a wooden wall right across the vessel.

He then went down and proceeded to fill the space between this wall and the ship's bulkhead with cement. This was mixed dry in the 'tween-decks with sand and stones, and sent down to him, on the endless chain principle, in iron canisters with a canvas bottom fastened with a slip-knot.

He would open the bottom of the canister as close to the ground as possible and spread the cement with his foot as it fell out, when it would, of course, mix with the water.

Fortunately for us, there was a quantity of cement at Murmansk, and more fortunately still, there was a vessel due shortly to leave for Kem, only four hours' distance by sea from Soroka. A hurried cable to the D.N.T.O. produced a promise to ship 300 barrels (at £2, 12s. 6d. a barrel) within a few days.

Meanwhile there was plenty to do in constructing the wooden bulkheads, in cleaning away the debris from the engine-room and stokehold, in strengthening the ship's derricks and rigging new running gear, in bringing aboard and cutting to size heavy 16-inch logs from Stewart's mill with which to shore down the tank-tops to stand the pressure when the ship should be pumped out; in connecting up steam pipes all over the vessel and persuading the rusted winches to work again, in taking accurate soundings in the direction in which the ship should be taken out when she floated, in strengthening the poop and the after-hatch coamings with timber, cutting a hole in the poop and fitting a fairlead (without pneumatic tools) so that the ship could be heaved off to an anchor laid out on the port quarter, in lowering pumps down into the holds and connecting up suctions, and in half a hundred other directions.

The only pumps we had been able to procure were two Worthington pattern steam-pumps each with two 6-inch suctions, a 4-inch steam Worthington and a 2-inch.

Captain G. was very confident that these were all we should need, and that the cement bulkheads would be so water-tight that the ship could be pumped absolutely dry. Fortunately I (by this time regretting — too late — my ship with all her gear in England) believed in taking no chances, and sent a wire asking that a 12-inch Allen motor-pump (capacity 750 tons per hour) should be sent out with a good motor engineer from England to Archangel by the next ship

But how dependent we were to be on that motor-pump, and how good the motor engineer was to prove himself, I never dreamed at the time.

Throughout July the work went well. The *Aleida Johanna* left Murmansk, thanks to Captain Beck, D.N.T.O., after a last attempt on the part of the Russian authorities to stop her and cancel the charter, and duly arrived at Soroka. The cement arrived at Kem and was brought round in barges. Thenceforward the divers lived below in water the colour of milk, and the 'tween-decks were thick with cement dust that filled the hair and the eyebrows and the lungs of the men who mixed it. Five hours on end the divers would remain below, and then would come up and turn the pump for five hours for their relief, —a spectacle that would have sent the Secretary of the National Divers' Union of Great Britain into a rapid decline. For in this country the diver is a great man and will not even carry his own helmet.

The deck was knee-deep in shavings from the fresh-cut wood, and the continual clangings and hammerings from the engine-room told of activity there.

The hands turned to at 7 A.M. and worked to 7 P.M., with an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner.

The skies were blue and cloudless, the sun shone continually with just sufficient warmth to be pleasant; the sea was dead calm, and so clear that looking over the side one could see on the bottom every rock, and every tin that had been thrown overboard.

The launch—*Permoshnik*, or *Assistance*—puffed in every morning the five miles to Soroka for stores, in charge of one "Rat-Whiskers," an old man in whose veins was salt water instead of blood, who would live at sea until his soul passed into a gull, and whose irritating habit it was, when he went in alone with the launch, to tie up for as long as possible alongside the pier and sleep, when the launch was most needed at the wreck.

Rations we got on repayment from the local British A.S.C. officer, who had been called upon to feed so many strange people that he had lost the faculty of surprise. His flock included the British troops in the district, the Serbians, all the native population, the workers on the railway, a few casual Americans, French, and Italians, Bolshevik prisoners, and several hundred sleigh-dogs left over from the winter (who, however, fed largely on each other). All these had different scales of rations, and when they paid, paid different prices in different currencies. "Salvage," therefore, was only a matter of another daily indent, and "Rat-Whiskers" and the A.S.C. sergeant were soon on the best of terms,—particularly as our rations were "full-scale," and included both rum and cigarettes.

The men would come in

every evening to the saloon by their ratings—divers, engineers, carpenters, blacksmiths, crew of the *Aleida Johanna*, crew of the *Permoshnik*—for their tot of rum and their packet of cigarettes, and afterwards would sit about for an hour or two on deck, clustering round two who played on their mandolines and sang little Russian songs, now grave now gay, in voices of a singular sweetness.

The sun would go down, for we were too far south for the midnight sun, but there would be no darkness.

Kischfeldt, the captain of the *Aleida Johanna*—a huge man with a great heart, before the war the youngest captain in the East Asiatic Company from Libau to New York, and master of the *Kursk*, a 14,000-ton ship—with a passionate fondness for music, would talk to me of "La Tosca," which he had last heard in Odessa and I at the Opera Comique, or hum an air from "Pagliacci," his favourite opera and mine.

Or he would tell me of what he had seen in the Baltic during the revolution—of the officers of the battleships slaughtered or thrown overboard with weights at their feet, so that when the wife of one sought to recover his body, the diver she sent down found them upright like trees at the bottom of the harbour, swaying to the tide. He would tell, too, of what led up to it all. Of how he had seen train after train full of troops going up to the line with no arms at all, with uniforms of shoddy, and boots of paper; of notices in the parks in Petrograd, "No dogs or soldiers admitted"; of officers who struck and flogged their men, but never went round their trenches; of how he himself had fought in the battle of Tsushima and seen the Russian fleet betrayed and destroyed by the incompetence of its officers; and of the corruption at the heart of all Russian Government and all Russian institutions.

That Russia was ripe for democracy he did not believe, but he pretended to no regret at seeing the old régime wiped out in blood. Nor could one wonder when one saw the puppet Government we had set up in Archangel and the arrogance of the officers who paraded the Troitsky in epaulettes and spurs, and showed no disposition to go nearer the front.

The necessity for procuring various stores took us frequently to Popoff, the port of Kem, and occasionally to Archangel. The D.N.T.O.'s mess at Popoff was a very welcome port of call. There was a young and very cheery crowd there, who spent their spare time in learning the language of affection in Russian, and in organising dances at which they competed for the favours of the beauties of the village, whose names I have forgotten but whose dancing I remember. It was curious to watch in the Y.M.C.A. hut, to the sound of a concertina, dances which one had seen at the Russian ballet a few months before at the Alhambra, done with no less grace,

Considerable indignation was felt at the time at the conduct of certain young Flying officers who had gained what was felt to be an unfair advantage over the Navy by having parcels sent out specially from Venns containing garments calculated to revolutionise the ideas of the maidens of Popoff.

It was at Popoff, too, that there occurred an example of poetic justice. A fatigue party was being marched down the plank-road, carrying corrugated iron. To my surprise, the right-hand man of the leading section of fours was my late Bn.H.Q. mess cook in France, who, coming to me in great distress, and out of work after demobilisation, had been given a job at 14s. a day, which he had thrown up at the end of a week. His bad cooking I had suffered in silence for some months, but his ingratitude I was glad to see suitably rewarded.

Towards the end of July I heard that the 12-inch motor-pump had arrived in Archangel, and went over with the *Aleida Johanna* to collect it.

I found in charge of it a small motor engineer about twenty years old, whom I had not previously met. His voice showed that he came from the Tyne, and his look that he preferred Newcastle to Archangel. He paid very little attention to me beyond telling me that he had had to come away at a day's notice, and had not had time to get all the spares he wanted, and devoted himself entirely to the pump, on which he would allow no Russian to lay a sacrilegious finger.

Both he and I watched it with a good deal of anxiety as, a day or two later, it went up the side of the *Ulidia* and was lowered down No. 2 hold—for the ship's derricks had not been improved by two years' neglect, the pump weighed a ton and a half, and the box containing its suctions and steel discharge-pipes three tons.

However, it was got safely down into the 'tween-decks and pushed aft against the bulkhead.

The purpose of this was that, by cutting out a plate in the bulkhead, and by having one set of suctions in the stokehold and another in No. 2 hold, the pump could be made available for whichever compartment most needed it.

The law of the obstinacy of inanimate objects, which usually ordains that there shall be a stanchion or something of the sort in precisely the most awkward possible position, did not operate in this case; for immediately above the pump was a ventilator, and up this the 12-inch steel discharge-pipes were led. A bend on the top allowed the pump to discharge clear over the side near the gangway.

This led to a number of alarms and excursions; for Reay, the motor engineer, from his position at the pump in the 'tween-decks, never knew whether or not there were boats alongside when he started

the pump, and was not usually inclined to climb out of the hold to find out. There would be a few preliminary coughings and splutterings as he started the engine, but this gave very little warning, and within a few seconds the pump would be throwing water "full bore," and a solid stream from the 12-inch pipe would be falling at the rate of 700-800 tons an hour on to whatever happened to be beneath it.

The *Aleida Johanna* on the first occasion filled nearly up to the rails before Reay could be persuaded to hear, above the roar of his engine, the voices of the agitated Russians shouting down No. 2 hatch.

These episodes were, however, nothing beside the renewed feeling of confidence which the pump gave to all on board.

A few days after it arrived it was considered that the cement bulkhead in No. 2 had hardened sufficiently to allow of our "trying" the hold.

The motor-pump, "Old Bill," as it was christened, was started away, and to every one's delight the water in the hold was seen to be falling steadily. Within twenty minutes the tank tops were dry, and the pump was throwing up a mixture of dirty water, cement, and sand from the bilges.

In order not to put too great a pressure on the tank top, we had decided only to pump on the falling tide and during slack water. Time, therefore, was short. A crowd of men had been standing by, and, when water was still about three feet deep, they were down in the hold working feverishly to get into place the huge stanchions of 16-inch timber which were to shore down the tank top and make the ship solid up to the deck. These vertical supports stood on horizontal baulks laid along the tank top in order that the strain should not come at a number of isolated points, but should be equally distributed, while between the tops of them and the 'tween-decks were similar logs laid horizontally.

Stanchions of the same size were carried up from the 'tween-deck to the main deck, so that the tank top had virtually the added strength of both these decks, and before it could give way must push them both up with it.

The ship was thus practically "in one piece."

While the carpenters were busy getting these stanchions into place, some of the divers in wading-dresses were working along the bilges locating the worst leaks, while others were busy putting in "tumbler" bolts to replace the many loose or missing rivets in the tank top which were sending up miniature fountains of water.

The tanks were, in fact, a mass of small leaks, and when Reay stopped the pump, it was only five or six minutes before there was a foot or so of water on the floors.

However, now that we had seen the hold dry, it was much easier for the divers to work at eliminating the leaks one by

one, and all hands were in good spirits.

Reay became a popular hero, and an admiring crowd was usually to be found round the pump whenever he gave it a trial run.

Needing an assistant to fetch and carry spanners, petrol, &c., and to swing the engine for starting, he attached to himself one Savonoff, who became his devoted slave.

They spent all day and most of the night in their dark corner of No. 2 'tween-deck alongside the pump. Coming down unexpectedly, I would find Savonoff creeping about on his stomach making explosive noises or gazing at Reay between the crossed fingers of his two hands. Reay would explain that Savonoff was telling him about his experiences in the Russian armoured cars, or how he had gone to gaol for assaulting a policeman in Petrograd. Neither knowing a word of the other's language, they understood each other perfectly, and would carry on long and intricate conversations on all sorts of subjects entirely by gesture—of which Savonoff was such a master that I have always regretted that I did not secure him for the "movies."

For very few other Russians had Reay any respect. Their habit of eating cold raw bacon for breakfast, and putting apricot-jam into their tea, was a constant irritation to him, and certainly it was not pleasant to watch.

Moreover, they were continually grumbling about their rations, which were on exactly the same scale as those of our own troops, and far more liberal than those issued to any other Russians, and it was noticeable that the general tone was not so contented as it had been before. The truth was, that Bolshevik feeling was in the air, and that we had one or two agitators who were quick to take advantage of it. Soroko itself had been in the occupation of the Bolsheviks, and Belaieff's mill-workers and, still more, the railway employees were strongly though secretly in sympathy with them.

From Soroka we had about a dozen carpenters and a certain amount of casual labour, and these were infected with the new principles, and were not slow to begin propaganda amongst the rest.

However, there was nothing seriously to worry about until the end of the first week in August. The work was going on—though not as fast as we had wished, for we had hoped to be ready to attempt to float by this time—and I had gone over to Archangel to persuade the bank there to disgorge some of my money.

It was unsatisfactory to have to go away and leave Reay the only Englishman on board the ship; but the men had to be paid, and the bank, though they readily admitted that my account was several thousand pounds in credit, blandly stated when

I wrote to them that they had no money, and therefore regretted their inability to pay. They continued to do business as usual, however, and, after the D.N.T.O.'s interpreter and I had cornered the manager in his private office and refused to go or to allow him to go until he produced some hundred of thousands of roubles, we eventually got the money, though he attempted to palm off some nine different breeds of rouble, each more obsolete and spurious than the last.

The identification of Kerensky's, Nicolai's, perforated and not perforated, Tzar notes, Archangel notes, British guaranteed roubles, &c., had by this time become something of a fine art.

Having secured the money, I was anxious to get back as soon as possible.

There was a sloop—one of the "Flower" class—calling at Onega and going on from there to Popoff, whence I could get to Soroka by train.

While in Archangel I had heard stories of mutinies of Russian troops and the murder of British officers up the Dwina, but I had not paid much attention to them. On board the sloop, however, was a subaltern in the Rifle Brigade whom I had last seen on the morning of 21st March 1918, opposite St Quentin, when he was taken prisoner. He told me that he was one of five officers detailed to join at Onega the 5th North Russian Rifles—reputed to be on the brink of mutiny. They had not been allowed to take their servants, none of them spoke Russian, and they had no interpreter. I advised him, unnecessarily perhaps, to be careful, and saw him ashore at Onega. I debated whether I should go ashore myself, but there happened to be a tug just leaving for Popoff which would arrive before the sloop, and I decided to go aboard her.

It proved a lucky decision. In the first place, we had only left Onega an hour when the 5th Russian Rifles mutinied, murdered all the officers in the town, including, presumably, my friend in the Rifle Brigade, and handed over the place to the Bolsheviks' troops. Onega was the next post to Soroka.

Secondly, the navigating officer of the tug was Lieut. E. J. Grey, D.S.C., a New Zealander, and the best type of sailorman, who had been second in command of the famous Q-boat *Stockforce* in the historic action in which her commander, Captain Auten, won his V.C.

He was very interested in the *Ulidia;* we quickly became friendly. I saw at once how valuable he would be to me, and immediately on our arrival at Popoff we both telegraphed to the Ministry of Shipping and asked that he might be demobilised at once.

No difficulties were made, as he was supernumerary, and within three or four days he was in our employment and had joined us aboard the *Ulidia.* He was a very welcome addition.

We kept a discreet silence about the affair at Onega, but the sudden increase of troops passing through Soroko, and the fact of aeroplanes flying over in an easterly direction, made the men suspect that something was in the wind.

Such news travels quickly, and it was soon known on board. The effect was disquieting. The men were already "fed up." They had been working six weeks at Soroka, which had no amusements to offer them, and they now had large sums of money in their pockets which they were anxious to spend at Archangel. Moreover, they were frankly frightened about the possibilities of a Bolshevik advance on Soroka.

In this they differed from the local labour, who were openly exultant about it, and began to grow very idle and truculent.

The first step was a deputation from the Archangel workmen to say that they wished to leave, and insisted on the *Alcida Johanna* taking them home to Archangel at once. We pointed out that it was only a question of a week or so before the *Ulidia* would be floated, and when this had no effect, told them that no one would navigate the *Johanna* for them and that she would not leave.

With the arrival of a deputation from the local labour — armed with axes — things began to look more serious. They stood in the saloon with their caps on and their hands in their pockets, laughed in an openly contemptuous manner, talked for a considerable time about some purely imaginary grievance, and went on strike.

The sight of them sitting about doing nothing had naturally not at all a good effect on the Archangel party, who were working under protest. Captain G. was wildly indignant, but powerless.

Reay, Grey, and I held a hurried council of war.

An urgent telegram was sent to the ordnance at Popoff, and by the next train arrived two cases. We had the launch in to meet the train, and the two cases were hoisted aboard and carried into the saloon. Here they were hurriedly unpacked —and the first intimation our friends had of their contents was when (having walked unobtrusively up on to the bridge) we "loosed off" a drum from the Lewis gun over the side, and then, idly fingering a Mills bomb, proceeded to call a meeting. At this we explained that the salvage operations were in their most critical phase, and that we had no intention of having them interfered with. That any one who did not work would get neither food nor pay, and that if he wanted to resign his job and go ashore he would have to swim.

The rattle of the Lewis gun had had an instantaneous effect: we were now "top-dog" again and work was resumed.

About this time we had

our first taste of bad weather —a two days' blow from the N.E., the worst quarter. The ship moved about as if she were at sea, and we spent two harassed and sleepless nights as we listened to her grinding and straining on the rocks. Whether as a result of this blow, or of the poor quality of the cement, subsequent pumping tests showed that the ship was far from tight, and that a good deal of water came through from under our bulkheads.

The 12-inch pump could dry out No. 2 in half an hour or so, but it had to be kept running if the hold were to remain dry. The two big steam pumps could pump out the engine-room and stokehold, but the donkey-boiler could not give them sufficient steam, and the *Aleida Johanna* had to remain alongside and give the steam through a flexible steam pipe.

By shifting the suctions of one of the big steam pumps temporarily to No. 3, No. 3 and No. 4 could be pumped out and could be kept dry with the 4-inch Worthington.

This left no reserve pumping power, nothing for No. 1, and no tug available to get hold of the ship when she floated, and take her across to the other side of the bay where we had decided temporarily to repair her.

To add to our troubles, all local opinion was unanimous that we could expect little more fine weather, and that after the middle of August strong winds would be increasingly common, and would develop into gales with the commencement of September.

It was now that I regretted bitterly all our pumps in England. But, like the Dutchman's anchor, they had been left behind and regret was useless. It seemed hopeless to look for any more pumps locally.

By a fortunate accident, however, the greater part of Soroka had recently been burnt down, and, a week or two after the fire, there arrived a handsome motor fire-pump for the captain of the port. It had two 4-inch suctions, but was intended to draw water from nearly its own level and throw it to a height.

However, it was a pump, and after prolonged negotiations, assisted by one or two bottles of whisky, it was brought on board in triumph and placed down No. 1 hold on a special staging, Soroka being left to look after itself.

But it was now 28th August —we had spent about £10,000, the ship was not yet afloat, England was more than two thousand miles away, and the evacuation of North Russia seemed every day more certain.

Already the summer was nearly over and darkness was setting in quite early in the evenings, while 2nd September was the last of the spring-tides.

Things looked black. I sent a despairing telegram to Dawes to despatch a big tug, if possible with a pump on board,

and Grey and I went off to Popoff in search of a pump we remembered to have seen there on the quay, after leaving strict injunctions with Captain G. that only ordinary routine work was to be carried out in our absence.

We found the pump where it had lain since it arrived brand new three years before. The harbour-master was only too glad to get rid of it. It appeared that he had indented for a small pump with which to pump out barges. The commission on such a pump would not, however, have been sufficiently large for the official whose business it was to buy it, and he had therefore ordered the one we saw. This weighed over six tons, and was of a type intended to distribute water over a whole town. It had with it no suction or discharge pipes. However, it was a ten-inch steam-pump, and we decided that we could make flanges for it and connect up our spare twelve-inch pipes to it. The additional pumping power thus gained would be invaluable.

Unfortunately the captain of Stewart's small tug, in which we had come round, was quite decided (and not without reason) that it could not be put on his decks without going through them.

A hurried telephone conversation with the A.Q.M.G. of General Maynard's force, and an explanation of our difficulties, produced an immediate order to the R.T.O., Popoff, to supply us with a special engine and truck and the promise of a clear line to Soroka. My opinion of the staff went up with a bound.

But it was impossible to lift the pump on to the truck in one piece. The engine-room staff of a tug-boat alongside was enlisted, and after a strenuous couple of hours the pump was reduced to its main constituent parts, loaded and securely lashed by Grey, and we were off.

We were soon grateful for the lashings, for it was a hair-raising journey. The track between Popoff and Soroka was very bad, and the single flat truck without sides swayed about in the most alarming manner in rear of the engine. We were afraid all the time that it would capsize, or that some piece of the pump would break loose and take charge. This, however, was not our only trouble.

The engine burned wood, and we travelled the whole way in a cloud of sparks which, falling on us faster than we could pick them off, burned innumerable holes in our clothes.

None the less we were in great spirits, for we had the feeling that we carried with us what might prove the deciding factor in the operations.

We had sent the tug-boat off immediately we had been promised the special train, to give Captain G. orders for a barge and a working party to be alongside the pier to meet us and to get the pump aboard the wreck without delay.

It was eleven o'clock and pitch dark when we ran into the deserted station of Soroka.

It was a mass of sidings and engine-shops, and we were faced with the necessity of complicated shunting to work our truck across the yards and down the pier, the single line of which was usually filled for its entire length with empty waggons. Leaving Grey to watch the engine-driver, who seemed anxious to uncouple the truck and return home, I proceeded to dig out of his bed the R.T.O., who was a friend of ours, and with his help to mobilise a party of Russians. They were not enthusiastic, but after an hour's hard work we were puffing slowly down the pier.

Grey had walked on ahead and I was on the cab of the engine. I heard him shouting, but it was a minute or so before I understood him to be saying that there was no barge alongside and no sign of any one from the *Ulidia*.

The engine-driver took advantage of our agitation to make his escape, and we were left standing alone on the pier —in a state of mind which can be imagined.

There was no hope of any tug in Soroka at midnight, and we made our way disconsolately to the hut in which lived the marine corporal and half a dozen privates, who had relieved the A.S.C., and were now "Supplies, Soroka," with the idea of spending the night there.

Their mess had become a club for us, and we were soon drinking hot tea and rum with them. This was very welcome, but it could not relieve our anxiety as to the state of affairs aboard the wreck in our absence. Perhaps, however, it stimulated us to make the decision we did.

This was to row off to the ship in one of the small boats used for the ferry—a sufficiently mad idea, for they were hardly larger than canoes, and of much the same construction.

The *Ulidia* was over four miles out—six miles, including Soroka channel—in the open sea. No sign of her could be seen; the night was black, without moon or stars, and there was a fresh breeze blowing. Moreover, there were strong tide-rips in the bay. Grey probably appreciated the risks much better than I did, but we pushed off, carrying a lantern in the stern.

Only one of us could row at a time, and changing seats in our cockle-shell of a boat was not easy.

While we were under the shelter of the land all went well, but when we were out in the open bay our chances of reaching the *Ulidia* seemed very problematical.

Once a tide-rip caught the boat and turned her completely round, and several times we shipped a good deal of water.

For what seemed hours we continued to row in the direction of the wreck without

seeing any sign of her, and we were beginning to be seriously afraid that we had missed her and were rowing out into the White Sea.

We discussed the question of turning round, but the ebb tide was now running very strongly, and it was a question whether we should be able to pull back against it.

While we were discussing what to do, Grey, who was sitting in the stern-sheets, called out, and, turning round, I saw the black mass of the ship looming up broadside on ahead of us. Pulling with renewed vigour we were soon close up to her.

Both of us felt suddenly as though we must be living in some nightmare world remote from reality. The ship was there, and yet there was some extraordinary change in her which we could not understand. Then we realised what it was. She had turned completely round, and her bows were now, as near as we could see, where her stern had been before. Hurriedly we climbed over the side.

The first sound that we heard as we ran forward was the roar of the engine of the 12-inch pump. This showed that something unusual must be happening, for the pump was never run at night. Yet the ship seemed in almost the same position—except that she had turned round.

We almost fell down No. 2 hatch in our haste to get to Reay. He greeted us with a look of absolute dejection, the only time that I ever saw him other than optimistic and confident.

"They've chucked her away," he said. "Captain G. told me to start the pump about three o'clock. I thought it was just for a trial, so I came down here and got her away. I never knew they'd started pumping all the other compartments as well.

"The first thing I knew, they came rushing to me as if they were mad.

"It seems that as soon as they got her pumped pretty well dry she floated—all except the stern of her, and that's still fast on the same rock—and swung right round with her bows in deep water.

"They can't take her away, because we haven't a tug. The *Johanna* has to stay alongside to give steam for the pumps through the flexible steam-pipe. In any case we couldn't go across this bay at night.

"She's leaking badly everywhere, and here in No. 2 hold I've got to keep the motor-pump running full-bore to keep the water under.

"If it stops she'll fill up and go down in deep water.

"Old Captain G. has been here praying me to keep it going.

"But you can't run a motor-pump like a steam-pump. She's been overheating and missing a lot—she's been running since four o'clock, and it's half-past two now—and I've had to nurse her all the time.

"If she stops, we've lost her."

He concluded with his opinion of Russia and all Russians, and indeed it made one nearly despair to see all our work thrown away by their folly.

Reay was very tired, for he had been up night after night; but the only thing was to trust to his skill and determination, and beg him to keep the pump going, while we went up on deck—first, to relieve our feelings by talking to the Russians, and, secondly, as a forlorn hope to keep a look-out for the lights of the tug from Archangel which—if she had been sent—should soon be due.

Dawn found the position unchanged.

The big pump was still running, Reay standing alongside it, haggard and exhausted and almost asleep, but alive to the slightest alteration in its steady note. Grey and I, who had been pacing the deck together, and were nearly as tired, had scanned the horizon in vain for the first glimpse of smoke.

As soon as it was a little more light, Grey roused out the unwilling crew of the launch and went off in the direction from which the tug should come. Soon the launch was a mere spot in the distance, and then she had disappeared altogether from sight.

I was sitting down on the bitts on the forecastle head, feeling as hopeless as I have ever done and almost asleep from exhaustion, when, looking up suddenly, I saw a trail of smoke.

Was it the launch returning, or was it the tug? I ran for my glasses, only to put them down again dejectedly. It was the launch. But looking up again a few minutes later, I saw more smoke astern of her, and it was not long before I could make out the shape of a big tug of the "Saint" class coming up at full speed. As she drew near, Grey went aboard her. It was evident that he had convinced those aboard of the urgency of the case.

Beautifully handled, she came alongside the *Ulidia's* port bow, her crew all on deck making her ropes ready, and unlashing the 6-inch motor-pump she carried.

Within twenty minutes the pump was aboard and was down No. 2 hold, close to the 12-inch, with its suctions and discharge-pipes connected up, and the *St Mellons* was fast alongside.

The ship's own engineers could not get the pump away, being more accustomed to steam; but Reay, leaving the 12-inch, pumping full-bore, to its own devices, put in a few minutes' strenuous work, and it was soon pouring a stream of water at the rate of 300-400 tons an hour over the side of the *Ulidia*.

Thenceforward Reay divided his time between the two pumps, going from one to the other as either showed signs of stopping.

Grey took charge on deck

and arranged for signals to the *St Mellons* and to the *Alcida Johanna* (made fast on the starboard side) from the top of the bridge.

Then he gave the order, "Ahead—slow," to both tugs.

The ropes tightened, and, even before we had time to wonder whether she would come, the ship began to move almost imperceptibly ahead without a jar or a quiver from the rock on which she had lain for over two years.

"Half," and she began to gather speed.

Then "Ahead full" to the *Johanna* and "slow" to the *St Mellons*, and she swung gradually round and headed for the pier across the bay, alongside which we intended to put her.

It was a beautiful morning —Sunday, August 31st—the sunshine brilliant, and the waters of the bay fringed with woods, flat calm.

Grey handled her magnificently, steering her to a nicety by varying the speed of the tugs.

As we came off the end of the pier the *St Mellons* cast off and went out astern, and the ship came alongside so gently that one could hardly feel her touch.

(To be concluded.)

THE TERROR BY NIGHT.

BY AN IRISHWOMAN.

WITH the fatality that dogs so many of the measures for suppressing crime in Ireland, the order for motor permits considerably augmented the dangers and inconveniences of life. Before its introduction we could use our cars when and where we wished. The Government having decreed that permits signed by the British Executive were obligatory, and Sinn Fein having declared that such permits were an insult to the "Republic," the motorist ventured on the road at his peril.[1] Should he fall in with a Sinn Fein picket he might merely be turned back with a caution and his permit torn to shreds. But the chances were that his car would be wrecked under his eyes while a revolver was held against his head. The pastime of blocking the road and opening fire upon every motor that came along was extremely popular, for it could be indulged in by any one possessing firearms and a little spare time, and like most Sinn Fein practices, offered perfect safety to the aggressors.

It was past three o'clock on New Year's Eve, and forty-five miles of bad road lay between us and home, when the police sergeant at Kilfanaghan refolded the motor permit he had just examined and handed it back to me.

"Let ye hurry, Miss, the way that ye'll be home before dark," he said, "though, indeed, 'tis dangerous to be travelling the roads day or night since them permits was invinted."

His glance strayed to the many-coloured line on the chauffeur's coat.

"'Tis a target for death ye are with them medal-ribbons," he observed cheerfully. "God knows, 'tis peace and safety the soldiers should be having now wherever they'd be, and in place of it 'tis a reign of terror for them in Ireland."

As the car moved slowly on we exchanged the compliments of the season, and an ominous form of greeting that has crept into use of late: "May you be alive this day twelvemonths."

I had been duly warned of the risks of motoring long distances, but it is always difficult to realise the possibility of danger when outward conditions appear normal. The morning's run to Kilfanaghan had been a complete success, and I had no misgivings for the return journey. Indeed, the familiar country seemed peaceful enough for anything, while the roads were agreeably if significantly free of traffic.

When we emerged from the

[1] The permits have been modified to suit Sinn Fein susceptibilities.

woods surrounding Kilfanaghan, the blue and violet outlines of the mountains were already growing grey and indistinct. An hour or so later the car broke down at a wild and lonely spot in the middle of a notoriously "republican" district. Darkness had set in, and it was an added annoyance to find that neither head-lights nor side-lights were in working order.

Twohig, the chauffeur, after a superficial examination, decided that the clutch-disc was torn. He was confident of repairing it in "no time." I was less hopeful. Removing the clutch-disc is a slow business, even by daylight. With a small electric torch propped beside him Twohig was obliged to work more by faith than by sight. He was, moreover, inexperienced as a mechanic, and the cold mountain air numbed his fingers.

Four hours later, though the clutch had been repaired, the car still refused to move. Twohig turned his attention to the gear-box.

Although the little village of Tubbernaphooka was scarcely a mile off, and there were, besides, several farms in the vicinity, yet in all those hours no living creature had come into sight. This was the more surprising because news travels fast in Ireland, and the Irish peasant has an unfailing "flair" for accidents.

In the winter of 1914 I had a breakdown on this very road, and in less than ten minutes the car had been thronged by interested spectators proffering advice, assistance, and hospitality. It had been as difficult to restrain them from "slapping a cupful of paraffin into the machine, to see would it hearten it," as to convince them that neither the chauffeur nor I needed a "taste of whisky" to keep off a "fit of cold, or maybe a wakness."

Remembering this, I determined to follow the short-cut, half-bohereen, half-water-course, that led to Tubbernaphooka, and to ask for the loan of a lantern. At every cottage or farmhouse in Ireland the wayfarer, whether friend or stranger, is always sure of a welcome, and tea, I knew, would be pressed on us as a matter of course. As I approached the dilapidated cottages grouped round the ancient walled-in spring[1] that gives its name to the village, I felt there was something unusual about the place. The wind, blowing over the chimneys, brought no whiff of turf-smoke; no window showed a light. I went from door to door. All was silent. There was no sign of life anywhere.

Beyond the farthest cottage the whitewashed front of the police barrack standing behind its rustic fence was discernible against a dark mass of heather-covered hill. On reaching the fence, I groped stupidly for the gate before I realised that

[1] Tubbernaphooka, "the well of the Phooka," *i.e.*, a fairy horse that lives in water.

the fence was in ruins and the gate was gone. Inside, the narrow slope between fence and house formerly was ornamented with the badge and monogram of the R.I.C., skilfully carried out in whitened stones. Now the moon, suddenly shining out, revealed an alteration in the design.

Instead of the harp and crown, the pebbles depicted a skull and cross-bones, and below, in uneven letters, ran an inscription—

DEATH TO THE R.I.C.

There is always something sinister about deserted houses at night; and though we Irish have ample opportunity for growing accustomed to the emblems of death, yet they acquire a fictitious significance when encountered gleaming by moonlight on a lonely hill. I was glad enough to hurry back to the road and to see again the familiar dark bulk of the car.

On the road a strange figure confronted me, rising from the shadows. The creature wore an unusual-looking coat, and a cap of light material, tilted rakishly to one side of his head, gave free play on the other side to a great bush of tousled hair. The lower part of his suspiciously dark face was swathed in a muffler. I noticed his coat bulged over a hard shape—was it a revolver?

Instinctively I placed myself with my back to the car, and then I laughed outright, for Twohig's voice came from behind the muffler.

He explained that during my absence he had made up "a bit of disguise" by turning his greatcoat inside out, ruffling his hair, and using a cap he had found in the tool-box. His face, as he observed truly, was already black enough from motor grease for either a "Wran boy" or a raider.

"If any of them raiders comes along it will be best for you, Miss, to hide in a bunch of furze," he said. "I'll tell them I've secret orders from the competent military authority—Republican army"—here he grinned—"and any one interfering with me will be reported! Sure, I'll go Sinn Fein for the duration of the night, and they'll not destroy the car on me then."

The scheme scarcely seemed practicable; still, stranded and helpless as we were, it was well to have any definite plan of action, and at least it offered a chance of escape should raiders come on the scene. Besides, that a respectable citizen should be obliged to disguise himself as a malefactor in order to ensure safety struck me as thoroughly in keeping with the times.

Twohig cheerfully resumed his repairs, and for another hour or two tinkered away with no result. I sat on the step of the car, ready at a moment's notice to plunge into my "bunch of furze."

The moon was hidden by clouds, and a little icy wind crept down from the mountains, stirring the bushes with a faint sound suggestive of rattling bones. Overhead plover called eerily; now and then the melancholy howl of a

dog rose from a distant farm. Gradually I became aware, sitting there in the dark, that the whole spirit of the country, that psychic atmosphere which is nowhere more perceptible than in Ireland, had altered from what it used to be. The former sense of cheerful friendliness and careless goodwill was superseded by an atmosphere of mingled menace and apprehension. Irish people, it is true, are notably sensitive to unseen influences; but I believe even the least impressionable "Sassenach" with any previous experience of the country would be conscious of this change.

. . . . . .

The night had grown very dark and a fine rain was falling, when the drone of a motor became audible, rising gradually to a roar as it climbed the long hill from the bog-road. Twohig, who had been reduced to carrying on his experiments by the light of innumerable matches, crawled from beneath the car and raised his head to listen.

"They're up to no good racing that way in the middle of the night," he exclaimed. "'Faith, they're going as if the devil was behind them, and they'll be into us when they turn the corner."

Our car stood on a high ridge of hill where the road, bending sharply, followed the curving side of a glen. To the right the edges fell sheer away, to the left a rocky field rose steeply, and a long slope of grass and furze-bushes encroaching upon the road made the corner still more abrupt and dangerous.

Without stopping to think, I seized the electric torch and ran across the angle of grass, forcing my way through the furze, and reached the strange car a few yards from the corner. The torch which I waved was almost used up, but it flashed a couple of times before giving out completely. At the same instant Twohig, a disreputable-looking figure with his blackened face and wild hair, came dashing down the middle of the road in the full glare of the head-lights.

He raised his arm warningly; the car stopped dead, and the head-lights went out.

An awful moment followed for me, for I had had a glimpse of the occupants of the car, and they appeared to be wearing masks!

I was sorry then I had not chanced the strange car crashing into ours. Twohig's sage advice that I should hide recurred to me too late. Hitherto it had not struck me that I actually was a source of danger to poor Twohig: only for me he might have carried out his plan of "going Sinn Fein" for the night, and thus at any rate have saved his own life. Now, thanks to my folly, the masked men were bound to know that he was a chauffeur in loyalist employment, with a permit signed by British authorities. They were equally certain to discover that he had been a soldier, and had fought against their "glorious ally" the Hun!

He was indeed a target for death.

I felt bitterly angry with myself, and decidedly frightened as well. Meanwhile there was neither sound nor movement in the strange car.

However, I pulled myself together somehow, and addressing the denser darkness beneath the hood, asked, with as much arrogance as I could assume, who they were and where they were going. I had hardly spoken, when a man's voice said in tones of unmistakable relief, "Turn on the lights, Regan." And the head-lights flashed up again.

A small light in the body of the car was also switched on. It showed that the men—though their faces were darkly shadowed by caps and mufflers—were at all events not wearing masks. I felt immensely relieved—and it was amusing to find that the strangers shared my relief, for they also had been alarmed. The sudden flash of a torch in the bushes, and the sight of Twohig confronting them in the middle of the road, had left no room for doubt that they had been ambushed by raiders!

The owner of the car said his way lay through the village of Clashagoppul, some fifteen miles farther on, and offered to drive me there. As it happened, I knew a family in Clashagoppul who would surely take me in for the night.

The chances were all against our car being fit for the road again that night, and in any case we had no lights. The stranger gave Twohig a lift as far as a cottage by the roadside, where I hoped he would easily obtain food and shelter, for the Irish peasant is the most hospitable creature on earth. To my surprise, as we approached the cottage, the light in the window suddenly disappeared. We knocked and called in vain; nobody would answer the door.

At the next house a man was leaning out over the half-door when the car stopped. He withdrew precipitately, and the light was extinguished. However, he presently emerged cautiously by the back-door, and though he announced he would admit no strangers into his house, I was able to persuade him to give Twohig some food, and allow him to warm himself at the fire.

Meanwhile my benefactor was showing signs of impatience. This was the worst district in the country, he said. Quite close by, a police barrack had been evacuated, and a small village deserted on account of the prevailing lawlessness; the sooner we moved on the better.

We covered the distance to Clashagoppul at a record pace. Regan, the driver, dashed the car through muddy hollows, over stony ridges, and round perilous corners with equal impartiality. His master peered out from time to time, urging him to go faster. The rain battered our faces, and the car leaped and swayed on the bad road till one did not know one moment where one would

find oneself the next. Rounding a turn into a sheltered hollow, a faint whistle sounded, and we raced past a cross-roads: for a second I heard the skirl of pipes, and caught a glimpse of a long row of men drilling.

The sudden slowing of the car, accompanied by an exclamation from my benefactor, made me open my eyes, which I had closed owing to the lashing rain. We were passing through a deep-wooded glen a few miles from Clashagoppul. Just ahead, a great obstacle reared itself right in the middle of the road. At first sight, lit up as it was by the white glare from the headlights, it suggested a model of the rising sun carved in rough stone, the rays spreading fan-like to either side of the road. A closer view showed it to be the stump and roots of a huge tree placed on its side, reinforced with brushwood, and to all appearance completely blocking the road.

Regan, however, must have detected a weak spot, for after a moment's hesitation he rushed the car to the left of the obstacle, and though it grazed the roots on one side and the edge of the road on the other, it came safely through.

I fully expected a volley of shots from the high rocky banks, but it is evident that those responsible for the obstacle had grown tired of waiting in the rain for a chance car, and had taken themselves off.

In spite of the lateness of the hour, lights were still burning in the main street of Clashagoppul. I wished to telephone to my people at home, knowing they must be anxious about me; so my benefactor put me out at the grocery-store owned by one Daniel Herlihy, a very respectable man, who had installed a telephone and electric-light in his shop, and who owned a Ford car and a permit, though rumour said he had been warned to make no use of the latter.

To my surprise, before I could reach the door it was slammed in my face; I heard the key grating in the lock, and the cheerful shop-window became dark. I knocked and shook the door violently—something gave way, and it opened. The shop was plunged in complete darkness. I stumbled in a little way and stood still, uncertain what to do next. Regan, who had evidently grasped the situation, followed me.

"Ah, Danny, come out of that now," he said; "sure ye've no call to be afraid this time. 'Tis only a lady wanting to telephone." He switched on the light; Danny Herlihy rose from beneath the counter, looking foolish, and thrusting into an inner pocket something suspiciously like a revolver.

He was profuse in his apologies. "When I seen the motor at the door, I thought maybe some of them Sinn Feiners was after me permit. 'Faith, there's no knowing when they'd take a notion to come out and shoot ye; and they'd shoot ye dead, mind! They're

that badly rared and vulgar," he explained in a cautious whisper.

My friends the Fagans lived at the far end of the main street. Mr James Fagan combined farming with a little horse-dealing, and had married the heiress of a small general store. I had known them a good many years, and before the war had often stopped at their shop for tea on my way home from hunting.

The shutters were already up in the shop window. Through a chink I observed Mrs Fagan, her little niece, and Hannah, the elderly maid, counting the money and tidying the shop for the night. After knocking at the door with no result, I again peeped in. The child had vanished, and the two women were hurrying out of the back-door. Mrs Fagan, staggering under the weight of a large cash-box, glanced back as she passed through the door; her eyes were terrified, her usually ruddy cheeks chalk-white. A moment later her husband darted into the shop with the desperate air of one consciously facing death. He seized the hanging-lamp—a puff, and it was extinguished. In the darkness I heard the back-door slam.

It was an uncomfortable position in which to find oneself at midnight in mid-winter, having had nothing to eat for just ten hours, and with torrents of rain falling!

Across the street stood the police barracks;[1] I half thought of applying there for shelter, but judging by the reception given me by Herlihy the grocer and the Fagans, it seemed futile to expect any response from the police. For the R.I.C. live in hourly expectation of death, and a summons to the door by night can have but one meaning for them.

So, with the energy of despair, I went on knocking at the Fagans' door, and by-and-by a slight creaking overhead told that a window was being cautiously opened.

"Mrs Fagan," I called, "don't you know me?"

"God bless us and save us this night!" was the reply in the voice of Hannah, the elderly maid.

Too utterly astonished for any speech except breathless invocations upon the saints, she let me in at last, and pointed to the staircase. Upstairs, upon the landing, the Fagan family were assembled in silent consternation. The little niece was crouching under a table; Mr Fagan, armed with a stout hunting-crop, was supporting his wife, who later on told me that after hiding the cash-box under the tick, all she could do was to clap her hand on her heart and say, "God help us, Jamesy, *they've come!*"

The Fagans were horrified at what—in spite of the excuse of the "quare times"—they considered an unpardonable

[1] A few nights later this barrack was blown up by Sinn Feiners after a fight lasting several hours.

breach of manners on their part. They overwhelmed me with kindness and with food. Though at first they inquired if I had been "hurted," all further allusion to the "accident" was carefully avoided. The conversation during a meal that must have lasted nearly an hour, was skilfully directed into safe and seasonable channels, such as the weather, the joys of Christmas, and the probable number of foxes in the country.

Yet some instinct told me my hosts were consumed by a burning curiosity which I could do nothing to quench, as I could not guess its origin. The plain and simple fact of my car having broken down, and of the chauffeur having remained to look after it, seemed so very plain and simple that it surely could give rise to no speculation, and certainly called for neither comment nor explanation.

Just once Jamesy Fagan lapsed from his attitude of caution and asked a question bearing on the events of the night: "The shaffer that was driving you, 'twas not the fellow you had a year or two back?"

I told him that Twohig was a recent acquisition, and an ex-soldier.

"Ah, the poor good man! God pity him!" they both exclaimed.

Raising a corner of the tablecloth, Mrs Fagan wiped her eyes, while Jamesy gazed gloomily into the fire.

That they should take a sympathetic interest in soldiers was only natural, for their son, Cornelius, had joined up for the war, and served with considerable distinction. It struck me there had been no mention of him so far—perhaps because I had omitted to inquire for him.

"I hope Cornelius is well," I said. "Is he at home now?"

Mr Fagan shot a repressive glance at his wife.

"He is not," he replied. "He got a notion to go to England. Have you the old foxy horse still?"

Formerly the subject of Cornelius was inexhaustible; now his parents shrank from the mere mention of his name. It was my turn to feel curious. Nevertheless the hint I had received was too definite to be disregarded. I wondered, but asked no questions.

Mrs Fagan gave me a tidy little room once occupied by Cornelius.

She lingered after saying good-night. I guessed that, unhampered by her husband's presence, she was on the verge of either asking or divulging something of importance.

It is never wise to question my fellow-men except indirectly, so all I could do to help her was to repeat my thanks for her kindness and hospitality, and to express the pleasure I felt at seeing her and Mr Fagan again.

"Indeed himself and me always had a great wish for you since the time you'd come here with the foxy horse for a cup of tea," she said. "Sure didn't me heart stop dead

when I heard you'd met an accident! Thank God *you* were not hurted, anyway." The smile left her face all at once. "Tell me," she asked in a loud whisper, "*was he anointed?*"

Reply was impossible, for I was quite at sea.

"Did you get Father Heaphy from Tubbernaphooka to him? Could you get ne'er a priest for him at all?"

I had a glimpse, as it were, of land.

I shook my head. "There was no need——" I began; but before I could say more she grasped her thick grey hair with both hands and rushed out to Mr Fagan, who lurked, candle in hand, on the landing.

"Oh, Jamesy," she cried, "the shaffer was *killed dead!*"

It was no easy matter to convince the Fagans that Twohig was as much alive as I. From the first, apparently, they had put their own construction upon the account I gave them, and had taken for granted that we had been waylaid, and that Twohig was either lying wounded by the roadside or had been escorted away by the raiders.

On learning that he was an ex-soldier, all possibility vanished of his life being spared, and the one remaining point of interest was whether he had been killed instantaneously or had survived long enough to see a priest. Even after I had gone over the whole episode again and again, enlarging upon every detail, I found they still thought I was trying to hide the truth with elaborate and circumstantial lies, lest I should somehow expose myself to the imputation of giving evidence against Sinn Fein!

Yet the Fagans are most superior people, intelligent loyalists, and acquainted with "the ways of the gentry!"

I did not sleep well that night. Below in the street the Clashagoppul Tin Band defied the New Year and the R.I.C. well into the small hours of the morning. The discordant strains were accompanied by squeals and catcalls, cheers for de Valera, and invitations to the police to "come out and be shot." Towards morning a variation in the noise was introduced by sharp whistles, words of command, and the measured tramping of Sinn Fein feet. I fell asleep eventually, and awoke to the sound of church bells. Mrs Fagan, dressed for early Mass, was standing by my bed.

She asked anxiously if I had heard the "music" in the night, and assured me the poor fellows would have played louder only for a death in the village and they being very soft-hearted!

I had told Twohig that should he not turn up with the car by nine o'clock I would take steps to get back to the spot where I had left him. So, while the Fagans were at Mass I went across the road to the police station and telephoned to various garages and car-owners in the neighbouring towns. But the reply was the same in every case—either the drivers had refused to apply for permits, or the owners were afraid to take out their

cars. I wondered whether Danny Herlihy might be persuaded to run me out in his Ford car; but the police sergeant, whom I consulted, thought it would be a pity to let the poor decent fellow risk the pelt of a bullet after him on New Year's Day. "Maybe he'd have bad luck the whole year if he'd get shot on New Year's Day," he said solemnly.

Just then the Head Constable at Dunreagh rang up to ascertain my whereabouts. It was most opportune, for I explained the situation and was told in return that an ex-soldier car-owner in Dunreagh would come to Clashagoppul for me in a couple of hours.

The matter being settled, I spent the morning in the Fagans' comfortable sitting-room. Daylight is a great reviver of courage, and I found that much of the caution displayed overnight by my hosts had melted away in the sunshine. Moreover, they had almost succeeded in believing I had told them the plain truth about my adventure!

I was anxious to solve the mystery surrounding Cornelius. Mrs Fagan herself actually led up to the subject.

"'Tis seeking the picture, you are?" she said. "Indeed, 'tis after leaving a great gap on the wall."

Now that my attention was drawn to it, something certainly was missing from the wall facing the window—a fact emphasised by the square of wall-paper showing its original unfaded colour.

"Cornelius thought the world-wide of that picture," went on Mrs Fagan. "Didn't he buy it in London the first leave he got after the King visiting the Army in Flanders, and a grand gold frame to go round it, and a Union Jack flag to hang over the top! Sure every one in the country did be admiring it!"

I recalled the picture then—a large and gaudily-coloured portrait of King George V.

"It was a beautiful picture," I said. "Did Cornelius take it to England with him?"

"He did so," said Mr Fagan, settling himself into his wife's chair by the fire, for the shop-bell had rung suddenly and she hurried away. "'Faith, it was on account of the picture he went. And I'm glad he's gone, though Herself and me is lost without him." He lowered his voice, and, leaning towards me over the arm of his chair, went on: "I wouldn't say a word last night, for I didn't know whether *them that stopped you on the road* mightn't be after you still; and 'tis best to know nothing, the way you'd be giving them no occasion to take your life. God knows I'd not be telling you a lie on New Year's Day, but if Cornelius would be here now he'd be dead!"

He launched into a long description of the vicissitudes of Cornelius after he had been demobbed. With his wife and little boy he had intended settling permanently at Clashageppul to help the old people with the farm and shop. He had counted on a

pleasant life of industrious freedom after the years of war and hardship.

But Sinn Fein willed otherwise.

Cornelius was subjected to a persistent and relentless persecution. It began with a kind of social boycott. Nobody spoke to him on his way to or from Mass. Nobody would have any dealings with him at local fairs. He was warned, anonymously, to keep away from the pony races. Then the men employed on the Fagans' farm left without notice at the busiest time of the harvest. The cattle kept breaking out mysteriously and straying into bogs and glens. A valuable young horse was found entangled in barbed wire on an adjacent farm.

"Cornelius had great spirit in him always," said Mr Fagan, "and he knew it was because he had been fighting *agin* the Germans in place of *for* them that the Sinn Fein had him persecuted. But it vexed him when his wife was in dread to go outside the house, and when his young son would be playing at shooting policemen and shouting, 'Up the rebels!'"

"'Where did you learn that at all?' says Cornelius. 'At school, sir,' says the little fellow, and 'Up Dublin! Down England! Up the Huns!' says he, proud-like of his learning. Cornelius was lepping mad, and he wouldn't let him go to school any more. And didn't they come after that and throw stones on the roof in the middle of the night and say they'd shoot him the same as they'd shoot a policeman. He thought to best them in the latther end, though his wife was crying all the time to go back to England. But it was the picture settled him. He was smoking his pipe one evening after giving the young horse a gallop. Two men came to the door on bicycles. 'Ye have a picture within in the house,' they says. 'That's true maybe,' says Cornelius. ''Tis a picture of ould George the Englishman,' says they, 'and bedad! ye've got to take it down.'

"'Get out of that, quick,' says Cornelius.

"Well, they made off on their bicycles, for he put the fear of God on them with the look he gave them. But didn't ten of them come with black masks and guns at one o'clock in the night, and they bet the back-door in. Cornelius got a stick and went to the head of the stairs. 'We'll not allow a picture of the English King in the Irish Republic,' says they. 'Let ye take it down at once or we'll shoot it down,' and they up the stairs to the sitting-room. But Cornelius was in front of them in it, and had the picture whisked off the nail and into a cupboard in the wall.

"''Tis down,' says he, quiet enough; 'I'd not give ye the satisfaction of firing at his Majesty, ye dirty cowardly tinkers,' says he. They left him then, but he was terrible angry, and did no more, but away with him and his wife and child to England.

"'I fought for the freedom of

the world,' says he, 'and it's not the freedom of a dog I'd get in Ireland.'"

There was little one could say in comment on this tale. Mere words seemed inadequate, and it is a shameful fact that similar cases occur continually all over the country.

Fagan poked the fire vigorously. "The Government will be driving the decent people to go Sinn Fein to save themselves," he said bitterly. "Wirra! what ails them at all that they can't govern? Is it the way they're *afraid* of Sinn Fein?"

"Well, they seem to be going to give us Home Rule now, and perhaps that will settle the country," I suggested.

He laughed hoarsely.

"Is it Home Rule to settle the country when divil a man in Ireland can keep a law, let alone make one?" he asked; "and it's not a republic that would settle the country either, no, nor twenty republics! Though for the matther of that, it's not twenty republics there'd be in Ireland within six months, but forty, and the whole lot of them persecuting each other and wanting England to help. 'Faith, it's the English would have their fill of hardship in the latther end!" he concluded with gloomy satisfaction.

The sound of a motor-horn in the street told me the soldier and his car had arrived.

"Look," said Mr Fagan as I rose to go, "what's wanted is for the English Government to *govern*. Not to be fooling with Home Rule Bills and hungry-strikes and motor-permits. Let them keep the Union on and give us martial law till the country's settled again. What's that you're saying?—martial law would inconvenience the quiet people? Well, and what's in it now for us? Is it convenience we're having? It is not! Is it safety we're having? It is not! Have we liberty to do as we like? We have not! Then for God's sake let them give us martial law and *enforrce it!*"

. . . . . .

Late that afternoon I passed through Clashagoppul on my way home, and stopped to say good-bye to the Fagans.

The sun had set, and with the long hours of darkness before them their nerves were again in the ascendant. Mrs Fagan suggested I was incurring needless danger in being driven by a soldier.

Mr Fagan, with an uneasy laugh, referred to the political views he had expressed that morning as "all talk and thrash—same as you'd see on the newspapers."

Both implored me to say nothing about Cornelius.

"Herself does be very frightful by night," said Mr Fagan, "and indeed there's no saying quare things mightn't happen to us these quare times."

His parting words, gravely uttered, seemed to sum up the situation for many in Ireland at present—

"Wirra! what good is your life to you at all when you'd never know the minute that you'd lose it?"

CHANDRAGUP.

BY AL KHANZIR.

A CERTAIN afternoon of March this year found me at the City Station in Karachi on my way up-country after an absence from India that had extended throughout the War.

Now, if there is one thing that can make Indian railway travelling almost bearable, that thing of course is privacy. But on this particular day the train was crowded, and I looked in vain for an empty compartment. Finally, I had to content myself with an upper berth in a coupé, the lower berth of which was already taken up by a green canvas Wolseley valise. An upper berth for the two days' desert journey to Lahore!—it was a black business. I sat thoroughly soured and glared at that roll of bedding, wondering resentfully what manner of owner would eventually materialise.

But, after a little, mere vulgar curiosity got the better of me, and I furtively turned the valise over to take a peep at any name there might be underneath. There was nothing to be seen but four large white initials. Still, these told me all I wanted: for any one with such queer initials has surely no need to name his property in full. I felt that "J.U.D.E." could stand for no one the world over but for "Judy" Elkington. Now Judy and I had started life at the "Shop" together; and we had met again, in Simla-days before the War, when he had been in the Intelligence Branch at Army Headquarters. So we were old friends.

He had always been a good all-round man, had Judy. Within a very few pounds of the best professional jockeys on the flat, they used to say; and you might find his name, too, more than once in Rowland Ward. But that was only one side of him. For he had a quaint love for roaming the byways of Indian history and religion, and was a shining light of more than one learned Asiatic Society. Still, he never rode this hobby of his to excess, and was always the best of company. I was in luck after all; the Sind desert began to lose many of its prospective horrors.

Just before the train started I caught sight of a well-remembered figure strolling over from the bookstall, and we were soon shaking each other by the hand and making the usual remarks and inquiries that go with such a meeting.

The first hour or two of our journey were fully occupied in comparing notes. Then came Kotri Junction, with its adjournment for dinner. And afterwards, as the desert sand began imperceptibly to creep

through every crack and cranny, our first flow of reminiscences was exhausted and we had time to turn our attention to the daily papers that we each had brought.

Mine was the 'Pioneer.' But there happened to be remarkably little news that day, and I began to feel distinctly bored with it. However, just as I had finished the telegrams and leading articles, my eye was caught by a headline referring to the recent discovery of oil in Baluchistan. Now oil is such a vital commodity these days that none can help feeling vaguely interested in it; so I read the paragraph carefully. It was highly technical and left me little the wiser; but I gathered that the district where the oil had been found lay on the Makran Coast in Southern Baluchistan, about midway between Karachi and the Persian border.

"I don't know much about the oil," said Elkington in answer to a question of mine, but they tell me that it is no good. The whole formation is volcanic, you see, and the strata is so broken up that the oil has leaked away. But I was out in those parts this winter, so let's hear what the 'Pioneer' has got to say."

"Here you are then," I said, "just see what you can make of this." And I read him the following extract:—

"The oil-fields in question lie in the Malan Hills, not far from the Arabian Sea coast. Gaseous hydrocarbons would appear to have gathered in a state of pressure along buried anticlines underlying the impermeable clays. For, at different points, these gases have forced their way through fissures in the clays —to form remarkable mud-volcanoes. It is claimed that liquid hydrocarbons (petroleum) must also exist in large quantities, for the gases are continually discharged from the volcano craters, accompanied by an unceasing flow of liquid mud and brine. Indeed, during paroxysmal eruptions, these gases have been known spontaneously to ignite. . . ."

"By Jove, they have," Judy interrupted somewhat forcibly. "I've had more than enough of mud-volcanoes."

"But why this heat?" said I. "I was under the impression that a mud-volcano was the sort of creature a child might play with. You don't mean to say that you were rash enough to fall into one?"

"No, I wasn't ass enough to fall in, but I was precious near being pushed. The yarn has nothing to do with oil; but perhaps I had better inflict it on you, just in case you should still think I was in any way to blame."

"A little something with a spice of Canterbury Tale about it, to beguile the weary hours? That sounds delightful. Commencez donc, monsieur, s'il vous plait."

"Last autumn, then," Judy began, "when I came back

from Palestine, I had a couple of months' war-leave due. But England didn't seem to be much of a country to spend them in at the time. So I made up my mind to do another shooting trip. Now I had never shot a Persian ibex —the smooth-horned fellow, you know,—and the Makran coast was said to be full of them.

"Makran, too, was a place that I had always wanted to go to. You see, since the beginning of time it has been the great link between India and Western Asia. And there are a lot of things in the country well worth seeing, from an antiquarian point of view; those Shami[1] tombs, for instance, of which no one seems to know the origin. And much of the hinterland is still practically unknown.

"On the other hand, of course, I knew Makran to be one of the most poisonous places in the world. For it is nothing but a barren maze of broken hills—as hot as hell, where it rains with luck once a year, and the little water you get is guaranteed to corrode any but indigenous innards. But, after all, my leave was in winter, when the climate anyhow would be bearable. So finally I decided to go to Makran.

"The beginning of December found me setting sail from Karachi in a bunderboat, and shaping my course up the Arabian Sea. I don't want to dwell on that voyage. A bunderboat isn't built for deep-sea voyaging; it is an open affair for carrying goods inside Karachi harbour. The winds were contrary, and for five days I lived cheek-by-jowl with my Muhammadan crew in no more privacy than that enjoyed by a galley-slave. It was rough, too; you try a bunderboat in an Arabian Sea swell if you want to appreciate what Horace meant by 'inverso mare.'

"We were out of sight of land most of the time. But on the third day we sighted a low range of hills far away on the starboard horizon, the coastal range of Southern Baluchistan. And like enough, that was the very landfall that Nearkos made on his northward voyage, after he and his fleet parted from Alexander by the Indus mouth. As the hills grew clearer and clearer, I allowed my thoughts to wander to the succession of men of many races — Assyrian and Greek, Sassanian and Seljuk, Arab and Mongol, and as many more, who have thirsted and cursed and died in Makran —before the British came.

"In the end we reached the mouth of the Hingol river. It is about the only decent river in the country; though there are lots of others that start hopefully in the mountains, only to disappear in the sand long before they reach the sea. We crossed the bar at the mouth without difficulty, and found my camels waiting there as previously arranged.

[1] Syrian.

"With the camels was old Ismal, a local hunter come to offer his services as ghillie. He was a Brahui by tribe—a Muhammadan of course. A picturesque old boy was Ismal, old and shrunken, with flowing white beard and clean-cut Semitic features. His most cherished possession was his prehistoric matchlock jezail—a weapon of dread, and his body was slung round with a perfect armoury of powder-horns, cartridge-belts, and curved daggers. But, old though he was, I never could see the way he went—up a hill.

"While the camels were being loaded, I took a look round. The view did not impress me. In the foreground stretched sand and still more sand; in the background rose cruel naked hills of pale-grey clay and marl and limestone. It was the bare walls of a country in the building, to which the paperers and painters have still to come to add the grass and trees.

"Yet there was vegetation of a sort—grey ghosts of unfriendly vegetation perished of thirst. For here and there a squat aborted growth of camel-thorn and acacia, dwarf-palm and cactus, and suchlike prickly shrubs, eked out a miserable existence on rock and sand. Occasional clumps of tamarisk in the river bed lent the sole touch of green to the landscape. And one called to mind those Phœnician camp-followers of Alexander's army who had paused to gather the myrrh on the tamarisk, as they toiled painfully in rear through this nightmare land.

"A gale was blowing as we landed. Afterwards I came to associate Makran with constant gales,—gales that blew down my tent at night and blew away my bedding; gales that made it impossible at the critical moment to hold the rifle steady for a shot; gales that filled mouth and eyes and nose with dust and grit. In the shadowless glare of noon-day the hills loomed flat and unreal through the driving sand and dust-haze—as though fashioned from card-board.

"On the beach close by was a cluster of matting huts tenanted by long-haired fisher-folk. And it was not difficult to picture these hovels as still harbouring Arrian's Ichthyophagoi—'barbarians clothed in skins of fish or animals, covered with long hair and using their nails as we use fish-knives . . . fighting more like monkeys than men.' For such, he tells us, were the forefathers of these fishermen; the men who opposed Nearkos on that very spot when he touched at the Hingol to draw fresh water and to land supplies.

"On the sandy plain between shore and mountains a queer conical white hill gleamed in the sunshine. From his descriptions I recognised old Chandragup—to give him the name by which the Hindu pilgrims know him. He is one of the largest mud-volcanoes in the world. So I sent my camels on to camp while Ismal

and I made a detour to pay our respects to Chandragup.

"It was a long hot walk to his foot. To reach his crater I climbed laboriously to the top of the cone of dried mud that rises a good three hundred feet above the plain. This crater of his, by the way, is unlike that of an ordinary volcano, in that its contents are flush with the top; in fact, the black viscous mud bulges upwards above the rim like the surface of a brim-full cup of tea. Ever and anon there is a mighty heaving in his bowels, and the liquid mud is thrust up to an accompaniment of sullen gulpings—to sink again as soon as the paroxysm is past. Round the crater's rim there runs a narrow slippery path over which the contents are ever spilling during these eruptions — to trickle down the outside of the cone and dry in a crust of glistening brine.

"'These hills be Darya Cham,'[1] remarked old Ismal. 'If you take but one little step beyond that path-edge, the black mud will gulp you down for ever.' Then, spitting contemptuously into the crater, he added, 'The Hindu pilgrims think that a goddess lives beneath the mud, and, in my father's day, those sons-of-burnt-sires would throw in live boys and girls to make the goddess speak; but now human sacrifice is forbidden, so they have to offer coccanuts and suchlike trash instead.'

"'Goop! Goop! Goop!' muttered old Chandragup, in sullen lament over the sorry offerings of a decadent age. I was to meet Chandragup again; but even then I felt that there was something inexpressibly sinister about his black tortured surface, as though some evil spirit were troubling the pool.

"That evening we camped where the Hingol leaves the hills. Next day our camp moved a little farther up the gorge, while Ismal and I went to look for ibex. I shot disgracefully, I remember, and missed a sitting chance at a grand old cream-coloured patriarch, with great curving horns and a dark chocolate saddle-mark on his wither. The climbing was poisonous, and I got back to camp thoroughly tired and disgusted.

"I found my tent pitched in the narrow Hinglaj gorge, just below the shrine of Kali. Now this shrine was one of the things that had brought me to Makran, for it is a place with a very queer history. To-day it is held sacred by both Mussulmans and Hindus, though more particularly by the latter; but that is by no means the beginning of the story. For the shrine lies under the hill of Nani Mai, or Mother Nani, and men worshipped at the foot of Mother Nani long ages before the Prophet fled from Mecca; aye, and even before the Indo-Aryans first sang their Vedic hymns on their southwards march to Hindostan. Nani

[1] The Eyes of the Sea.

Mai is none other than Nana The Earth, wife of Anu Heaven, first of the Twelve Great Gods of the Assyrians. And she is older even than Assyria; for we know that Nana was worshipped by the Accadians in Chaldea a thousand years before the birth of Abraham.

"But Mother Nani has fallen on evil times. For to-day her main supporters belong to the Hindu sect of the 'left-handed' Saktas. Obscene worshippers of Kali these; their bible is the Tantra and their fierce licentious worship is based on unbridled indulgence in the 'Five Makaras'—to wit, wine, flesh, fish, mystic gesticulations and sexual intercourse. Human sacrifice once formed a common part of their ritual; and the prosaic cocoanut that the pilgrim still presents at the shrine is symbolical of the human head decked with flowers—once the favourite offering of the goddess. To this day, too, you may see shrines where the blood of humbler victims is never allowed to dry upon the sacrificial stone.

"Ismal had assured me that I should find the shrine-gorge a very paradise of verdure. But to my eyes, still unattuned to desert unutterable, it seemed a gloomy unhallowed spot. There were pools of water lying amongst the boulders, it's true; but the sheer walls of rock towered frowning on either hand to a good thousand feet.

"Just before dawn that night I was awakened by the barking of my bull-terrier, 'Jock,' so I looked out to see what was the matter. Outside I found the gorge in inky blackness, save for its very topmost rim silvered by the level rays of a setting moon, while overhead, incredibly remote, was a narrow strip of starry sky. From the direction of the shrine above, a wild music of chanting and the blaring of a conch came pealing down the gorge: the devotees of Kali were greeting the goddess before the beginning of another day. It was a scene for the pencil of a Doré; and I thought that it would be hard to find a more appropriate setting for the shrine of the deity whose worshippers picture her as a black fury dripping with blood and hung about with snakes and human skulls—the helpmeet of Siva the Destroyer.

"Bands of Hindu pilgrims from all over India collect periodically to tramp together to the shrine,—a weary tramp from Karachi of nearly two hundred miles by desert and mountain. And from the shrine they make an excursion to Chandragup. For, as Ismal told me, they throw offerings into his crater, and hold his answering burblings to be the divine voice of Kali. But between the visits of these bands, Nani Mai is deserted by all save a few hermits who stay as guardians of the shrine, and it was the chanting of those guardians that had disturbed us.

"Next morning, after breakfast, I strolled up to have a chat with them and to see the shrine, taking care to bring a

bottle of whisky with me—to pave the way to amicable relations.

"The shrine itself turned out to be a disappointing sort of place, for it was merely an open cavity in the rock, about ten feet above the level of the stream. It was faced with a low mud wall, and contained nothing but a few tawdry decorations of feathers and a heap of vermilion-smeared stones, representing the female counterpart of the Lingam.

"But by the cave-mouth two Yogis[1] were seated in the shadow. They presented a marked contrast to one another. The one was a slim fair-complexioned man, with finely-modelled features and slightly cocoanut-shaped head, —a typical Brahman clad in spotless white. His body seemed wasted by his vigils, and his eyes were sunken like those of a corpse; it was a a marvel to me how he had ever crawled as far as Nani Mai. I put him down as one of those speechless mystics who, by long suppression of their breath, think to pass into unearthly union with the godhead Siva. But the other was a very different sort of fellow; a bullet-headed beetle-browed ruffian, with an unkempt shock of brick-red hair and naked body smeared with ashes.

"Now these ascetics and yogis fascinate me intensely. A large percentage of them, of course, are mere religious impostors and charlatans,—men of the same kidney as the rascally dervish in 'Hajji Baba.' But they are good value even so. And I have no false pride. Before now I've fraternised with a gentleman clad in little beyond a coat of ashes, and found him extraordinarily entertaining.

"But this time I let myself in for a rebuff, for, much to my surprise, the two Yogis would have no truck with me whatever. The Speechless Mystic, it's true, seemed lost to all mundane affairs—a state perhaps partly accounting for his lack of cordiality. But, as for his shock-headed companion, Strewal Peter, he was actively offensive. For he glared at me with insolent bloodshot eyes, contemptuously waved aside my offering of Best Old Scotch, and spat loudly as I turned to go. A most unpleasant fellow altogether, I thought.

"We had decided to stay for some days in our camp below the shrine, for I wanted another shot at that big ibex. A few evenings later, as we were coming down from shooting, our way took us past the shrine. One of the periodical parties of pilgrims had turned up that day; but the enthusiasm of my welcome was distinctly damped by the fact that they were now busy washing away their sins in my water-supply, while the stream ran red with the blood of sacrificial goats.

"They were a queer mixture,

[1] Professional saints and mystics. There are thirteen different brands that worship Siva.

these pilgrims. Among them were sleek money-lenders from the bazaars of Indian cities, who had trudged the weary miles of sand to acquire the merit needful to balance their many extortions, and aristocratic Brahmans from Holy Kashi[1] on the distant Ganges, holding aloof from the vulgar crowd; barren wives in quest of heirs, and mothers more successful giving thanks for the fruits of a previous pilgrimage; virgins brought by doting parents, and everyday citizens by the score.

"But these were the respectable elements. There must have been close on a thousand pilgrims altogether; and it was the Yogis who caught one's eye—by their picturesque dress or lack of it. For I noticed naked figures smeared with ashes from the funeral pile and tricked out in necklaces of human skulls, and mystics wrapped in meditation clasping their gourds and begging-bowls; jugglers with performing goats, and other saints whose stock-in-trade was a miniature merry-go-round of rope and pole, about which they would whirl skewered through the muscles of their shoulders; penitents who took their ease upon a bed of nails, and all the miscellaneous rascals of a religious fair.

"And one there was, too, his naked body seamed with scars of self-inflicted wounds,—a ghoulish figure brandishing a chain with which to flagellate himself in the frenzy of religious ecstasy; when we have mentioned him we have touched the bed-rock of bestiality, for he was an Aghori — a devourer of carrion and human corpses.

"Strewal Peter seemed to be holding some sort of indignation meeting as I passed, for he was standing at the cave-mouth with a crowd collected beneath him in the stream-bed. He was too far off for me to hear what he said, but he pointed and shouted some obviously insulting remark. The crowd turned to stare, and one or two of them waved their pilgrim staves threateningly; so I hurried on to avoid a scene.

"This incident gave me to think quite a lot. For the crowd was unmistakably hostile; but I couldn't for the life of me think why, though I felt sure that Strewal Peter was at the root of the trouble. Ismal didn't like the look of things a bit either, and was all for our moving camp. But I wasn't going to give up that ibex to please any naked gentleman in need of a hair-cut. So we stayed on where we were, taking care to avoid the neighbourhood of the shrine. Still, the men were pretty jumpy, and I think we all had a feeling of impending trouble.

"This feeling was heightened two days later. A camel had strayed up the gorge, and one of the camelmen went to fetch it. But he was set upon and stoned by a party of pilgrims,

[1] Benares.

and came back to camp very badly scared.

"And that evening the storm burst. I was sitting in my tent after dinner writing my diary. Outside all was silent save for a subdued murmuring where Ismal and the camel-men were busy cooking their evening meal, and a vertical moon was pouring into the gorge making it as bright as day. Then suddenly the silence was shattered, and I found myself outside my tent staring towards the shrine.

"Have you ever unwittingly disturbed a swarm of bees in the jungle? Well, then, you will know what I mean: one moment there was stillness absolute, and — the next — a crash of angry sound almost as sudden and as startling as the bursting of a shell. It's a nasty noise, isn't it — the hum of the angry swarm thirsting for blood? But there is one nastier: the roar of a crowd that is hunting man. That was the sound that I was listening to now; and worst of all, I had a more than shrewd suspicion that I was their man. It was altogether a horrid sound.

"I did some pretty quick thinking in the next few moments; appreciated the situation—as they say in the promotion examinations. It seemed to me that there were three courses open: to cut and run; to shoot; or to try the power of the human eye. Ismal & Co. were all for the first, and frankly it appealed to me much the most strongly. But then, thought I, what a fool I shall feel if they aren't after me after all; I'm damned if I'll be scared by the howlings of a pack of Bedlamite fanatics. The second course I hardly considered. For, if once you start shooting, you must go on, or you are for it; and even with a magazine rifle one man has precious little chance against a mob. So I plumped for the third alternative. For after all the Englishman in India finds it hard to believe that the Indian will ever dare to lay profane hands upon his sacred person; even in these democratic days of race equality, there is a sort of sanctity that hedges him about.

"So I told Ismal that it would be 'all right on the night,' and that there was to be no shooting. Then I got up on a big rock in the bed of the gorge, and hoped for the best. All this time, the noise was getting nearer and nearer—it was the worst five minutes I've ever spent. Then, with a crash, round a bend in the gorge the yelling pack came into view.

"The leading hound was that Aghori — naked, ash-smeared, horrible—brandishing his length of chain. Close on his heels crowded the remainder—fat worthy citizens, fanatics, impostors—a panting, screaming mob; but now in the eyes of one and all gleamed the same lust for blood. I looked about everywhere for Strewal Peter, expecting to find him taking a leading part; but much to my

surprise there was no sign of him among the crowd.

"But he is a queer fellow, your Indian; you never know how you have him. All his life he may have been your best friend, capable of acts of extraordinary devotion, yet one fine day some one works upon his feelings and he tries to cut your throat. Hysteria, that's what it is. Why, there was a stout banker there in the forefront of the mob. Now, in the ordinary way, he was the sort of fellow to be content to make his 60 per cent all his days and to end up a Rai Bahadur[1]; but to-night he was a madman. And I could see that, for the moment, all that he longed for in life was to sink his nails into my flesh.

"The height of the rock that I was on had prevented the first wave from swamping me; and as the pack caught sight of me they bunched together, and their music ceased for a moment. That gave me my one chance. I talked, and I believe I might have held them even then.

"Then that damned fool Ismal went and spoilt the show. For all of a sudden his old matchlock went off with a roar in the background, and some one yelped and fell. That was the end of that. With a bellow of rage the crowd swept forward and lapped over my rock. I got that fat banker one on the point of the chin, and then I went down—but not till I had caught a glimpse of poor old Jock as he jumped for the throat of a naked ruffian, only to be spitted on an iron trident.

"I don't know much about the immediate subsequent happenings; an Indian crowd doesn't handle one nicely. But one memory will ever linger—of the fetid stench of sweating humanity; that bouquet peculiar to the Indian, combined of garlic and hot black-lead. There were too many of them on top of me at once—that was the only thing that saved me. And, just as I felt that life was being squeezed out of me, suddenly the pressure lightened, and I realised in a dazed sort of way that the Aghori was beating off my most intimate assailants with his chain. It worked like a charm—that chain; soon I found myself lying in a battered heap below the rock, while the Aghori harangued the frantic pack, leaping and baying round us in a circle.

"I suppose I'd had a knock on the head. Anyway, all this time a queer kink of memory kept some verses buzzing through my brain. Unpleasantly appropriate verses they were, too. Do you remember your 'Ingoldsby Legends'?—

> "'They have pulled you down flat on your back!
> Bloudie Jacke,
> And they smack and they thwack,
> Till your funny-bones crack,
> Good lack! What a savage attack!'

"Bloudie Jacke had never before had his proper meed of sympathy from me.

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[1] An honorary title.

"Then I vaguely realised that the stragglers from the pack were improving the shining hour by breaking up my tent. For, crash! out came my 'X' bed—closely followed by all my other most cherished possessions. And again memory automatically supplied the rhythm. I found myself repeating—

"'In your tower there's a pretty to-do;
Bloudie Jacke;
In your tower there's a pretty to-do.
All the people of Shrewsbury
Playing old gooseberry
With your choice bits of taste and vertu.'

"Gradually, as my senses came back to me, I began to grasp what the Aghori was saying. And then I got a nasty shock. For he wasn't urging the mob to mercy, but merely to utilise my vile body according to his views. The goddess apparently was hungry for human sacrifice—long denied her; and he pleasantly suggested that I filled the *rôle* to perfection. His motion was carried unanimously. With shouts of 'Chandragup! Chandragup! Throw him in, and the Terrible One will answer,' they hustled me to my feet, and bundled me down the gorge towards the shore.

"It was seven miles to Chandragup. More dead than alive, I was half-dragged half-carried in the centre of the mob. And every now and then some one would catch me a buffet to speed me on my way, or spit into my face at point-blank range. But by this time I was past worrying much about what happened, and all hope was pretty nearly gone.

"Then suddenly, in the sea of faces round me, I picked out one I knew. It was the Speechless Mystic's. He had looked more dead than alive when I had seen him at the shrine, but now he was legging it like a two-year-old. In fact, he was one of my most energetic persecutors, and it was his persistent proddings with his pilgrim's staff that now drew my attention to him.

"Then a most unexpected thing happened. For, as he bent right over me as though to give me a particularly vicious poke, to my utter amazement I caught a hasty whisper in English, 'Watch me and try to keep your head; I am a friend.' Next moment, it's true, he had begun again to belabour me with the best of them. Still, his blows, I noticed, hadn't much weight behind them. So I began to have just one faint ray of hope.

"We reached Chandragup at last, standing cold, white, and silent in the moonlight. The pack had tailed out a bit, but the check up the slope closed them up again, and we reached the top fairly well together. And there on the slippery brink they threw me down. The Aghori still dominated the proceedings. With his chain he beat the others down the slope, and he and I were left alone beside the crater.

"Then began a weird dance of death. For round and round the narrow slippery path the

Agheri capered in the moonlight; while the crowd swayed back and forward on the slope below and bayed in unison. Leaping high in the air, he would swing his chain repeatedly between his naked thighs—mercilessly belabouring his own back and loins in his ecstasy; while the crowd called on Kali by her hundred names to hearken to them and to vouchsafe a sign: 'Oh Bloody Toothed One! Answer us. Oh Horrible One! Hearken unto us.' Naked and ash-smeared, his antics called to mind the leper's dance in about the best short story Kipling ever wrote. For you remember how the Silver Man danced naked with his shadow, while Strickland was heating the gun-barrels?[1] . . .

"And all this time, by my side, within a few inches of me, lay the cruel black surface of the mud, momentarily at rest. How long would it be before I went down for ever in its choking embrace?

"Then came a point where I have never been quite clear what happened. I suppose the climax had been reached and the time for my star turn had arrived. For there was a sudden forward rush of the crowd. But, at the same moment, I heard a shriek even above the din, and next moment the mud was heaving sluggishly. The Aghori had disappeared beneath its surface. I had a vague impression that some one had pushed him from behind. But he may have slipped—I can't be certain. Anyway, in his place, the Speechless Mystic was now standing by my side.

"And that Aghori fairly stirred up Chandragup, for he had been quiet enough up till then; but now he gave us one of your 'paroxysmal eruptions' with a vengeance. First there was a heaving and gulping, as if he had swallowed something that simply wouldn't agree with him, and then all at once his whole crater was aflame—for all the world like a colossal Christmas pudding.

"The pilgrims had got their answer. And they didn't seem to like it. Back they went to the bottom of the hill; while the Speechless Mystic hauled me after them—to a safe distance. But he wasn't speechless any longer. He talked to them like a father—pointing out to them the error of their ways, and the punishment that had befallen the Aghori. It was a very chastened audience, with most of the religion frightened out of it. And, a few minutes later, as the last flames were flickering out, we two found ourselves alone.

"Then, as soon as the strain was over, I realised how absolutely done I was, and there and then on the side of the volcano I fell asleep. But my sleep seemed scarcely to have lasted a moment before I found myself being shaken back to consciousness; and I woke to find the Speechless Mystic

[1] "The Mark of the Beast."

bending over me. Ismal, too, had reappeared from somewhere, and was standing at the bottom of the slope holding a camel. Dawn was just breaking, and it was bitterly cold; I was chilled to the bone and so stiff that to move was torture. However, despite my protests, I was promptly bundled on to the camel. Then Ismal set off towards the shore with the nose-rope in his hand.

"I was much too miserable to question his movements. That ride was a nightmare. A baggage-camel with a pack-saddle is bad enough at the best of times; in my then state, the tortures of the Inquisition were as nothing to it. At last, more dead than alive, I rolled off at the door of one of the very huts that I had seen on first landing, the huts of the Ichthyophagoi.

"And in that hut I lived for five days—slowly recovering, while I waited for a boat to take me back to Karachi. My host was a great strapping fisherman called Billoo, and no one could have looked after me better. In fact, I ran some risk of being killed by kindness; for I was plied with delicious soles of Billoo's catching and with succulent Makran dates from Mrs Billoo's store-cupboard, and cosseted with broth of mountain-sheep fallen to Ismal's jezail; while the Speechless Mystic massaged my battered limbs as only an Indian can.

"And, lying on the hot dry sand in the shadow of the blanket-awning, while the breeze blew cool through the screens of tamarisk, I first learnt the inward history of that hectic night.

"For I had many talks with the Speechless Mystic. His is a profession in which it is always war-time, and he has been risking his life for the last dozen years in as many different countries. In San Francisco and in London, in Geneva and in Japan, he has carried his life in his hand to watch the innermost circles of the Indian anarchists. For he is perhaps the leading Indian agent of the C.I.D.[1]

"The War he spent in Berlin. But no sooner did he get back to India for some well-earned leave than he found himself recalled to headquarters in connection with the new Bolshevik menace from Central Asia. Well, as he figured it out to me, in dealing with Bolshevik propaganda you have two main objects in view—to stop as many agents as possible from getting into India, and to catch the rest after they get there.

"As regards the first of these objects, the northern passes of India are fairly easy to watch, and so are the regular seaports. But just look at the map and you will see that Makran is a weak point. For any ruffian can board a coasting dhow, say in the Persian Gulf, and land unquestioned somewhere in Makran. And, from there, it is a matter of no great difficulty to filter through over the border into Sind, for the ad-

[1] Criminal Investigation Department of India.

ministration of a country like Southern Baluchistan is bound to be pretty sketchy.

"Now suppose your Bolshevik agent has managed to reach India. Where does the best field for his labours lie? Where better than at the great centres of pilgrimage? For at these religious fairs thousands — in some cases, hundreds of thousands — of pilgrims collect from the four corners of India; so seed sown there is sown broadcast. And the pilgrims are then just in the right frame of mind, too, to be carried away by the pernicious doctrines of any self-styled saint or reformer.

"So it was with these considerations before his mind that my friend was sent to Southern Baluchistan, with orders to keep a special watch on Nani Mai. He travelled to the shrine in the disguise of an ascetic, and there he found Strewal Peter already in possession.

"The rest of the tale is briefly told. My friend soon saw that Strewal Peter was the very man he was after. So he took care to pal up with him, and to listen reverently to his teachings. When the pilgrims arrived, the work of propaganda at once began. And in his pose of Yogi, Strewal Peter knew well how to combine religious arguments with all the subtle doctrines of the Soviet—to kindle fanaticism against British rule. But at this stage mere murder was no part of Peter's programme; for he wanted his hearers to go quietly to their homes—to spread his teachings in preparation for The Day.

"But he made a mistake very common with agitators. He overrated his powers of control over the forces that he was generating. And before he realised it his leadership was gone, and the Aghori ruled the mob. So then Peter decided that the time had come for him to seek pastures new; for he had no wish to share in the limelight of an untimely murder.

"'But'—my friend remarked —'do not fear; he will not escape us. For every police-and levy-post is warned. And he has given me much useful information,—such as the names of their agents under training at Tashkend and Merv and Askabad, with the routes they mean to follow. Oh yes, we have done very well. But you, sir, you had an uncommonly narrow shave.'

"With that verdict I entirely agree. And, if ever any one asks me to visit Chandragup, I shall think of the reply of Sinan bin Selama, the Arab, when appointed by the Caliph to command the Makran Expeditionary Force: 'Thou showest me the road to Makran —but what a difference lies between an order and its execution! I will never enter the country, for its name alone terrifies me.' He knew a thing or two, did Sinan; and Makran has not altered greatly for the better during the twelve hundred odd years since his day."

CURIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING WITH REGARD TO THE TEMPERANCE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1913.

BY LYDIA MILLER MACKAY.

NOT long ago two simple Scottish electors, having been deluged by leaflets either advocating or denouncing Prohibition in view of the Local Option poll expected next November, and having heard much talk and many arguments in and out and round about the Temperance (Scotland) Act, 1913, took the extreme and, as it would now almost appear, the unusual step of expending 2d. in the purchase of a copy of the Act, and reading it over for themselves. To their amazement they found that it had nothing whatever to do with Prohibition, and that, so far from those who framed it having apparently so extreme a step in view, it seems to have been drawn up with the caution that has long been associated with our national character.

I think it is G. K. Chesterton who, in order to prove how our senses may deceive us under the influence of a preconceived idea, once wrote a fantastic tale of an old gentleman who was murdered on the top flat of some London mansions. The murder, it was proved by circumstantial evidence, must have been committed and the body removed within a few minutes of midday, and the case was the more puzzling because the porter and several other persons swore stoutly that they had watched the door of the flats during the whole of the time in question, and that no human being had gone in or out. After a long period of bewilderment, the mystery was solved by some clever amateur who came to the assistance of the law and discovered that the deed had been done by the postman. This supposedly harmless official had called at the usual hour, and, contrary to all precedent, had taken away the body of the old gentleman with the mails in his post-bag. So little, however, had the witnesses associated the thought of murder with a postman, and so sure had they unconsciously been that a post-bag could contain nothing more mysterious than letters and newspapers, that they had not even seen the postman in this new and unexpected character.

Exactly the contrary seems to have happened in connection with this Temperance Act. So sure has the public been that it contains Prohibition, that the shadowy form of this gigantic spectre has been seen flitting in and out of pages where assuredly it is not.

The other alternative one dismisses hastily. It cannot be that people write leaflets and make speeches about Acts which they have not read!

Experts here and there have, doubtless, put the facts plainly, but these facts seem, for the most part, to have fallen on unheeding ears. Let us, then, rid our minds of all preconceived ideas, and see what the Act really contains.

Words and names are often so loosely applied as to befog the imagination, and a definition may clear the air.

Prohibition, as demonstrated across the Atlantic, means that the manufacture, sale, importation, or distribution of alcoholic drink is entirely forbidden. The wealthy classes may still be able to have wine on their tables from cellars stocked under the old system, but no one, from end to end of the United States, can now buy a single glass of spirits without putting himself into opposition to the law.

Under the "No-License Resolution" of the Scottish Act, on the other hand, the wholesale trade in liquor is allowed to go on pretty much as it did before, and hotels, inns, and clubs will still be allowed to sell alcoholic liquors to their guests, or to any one taking a meal on their premises. With a doctor's order liquor may be bought at a chemist's; restaurants may provide spirits, wine, or ale with meals, and the well-to-do person need not be under any apprehension that his cellar will be interfered with; for, providing that he buys not less than two gallons at a time, his liberty to drink may even degenerate into license, without any interference from the Act. If, then, the No-License Resolution is not Prohibition, what is it, and why has it been the Nemesis of the "Trade" and the hope of the Temperance Party for the last seven years? On what, exactly, are we asked to vote in November?

We are to have three options put before us. (Here are the exact words of the ballot paper.)

1. No Change Resolution.
   (Means that the powers and discretion of the licensing court shall remain unchanged.)
2. Limiting Resolution.
   (Means that the number of certificates for the sale of excisable liquors shall be reduced by one quarter in accordance with the provisions of the Act.)
3. No-License Resolution.
   (Means that no certificate for the sale of excisable liquors shall be granted except for inns, hotels, or restaurants, in special cases, in accordance with the provisions of the Act.)

With the first two options we are not here concerned, but as to the third, half the story of the meaning of the Resolution depends on the little word "except," and the exceptions above mentioned seem to the writer to clear our post-bag from any suspicion of containing the body of that much-murdered old gentleman, "Prohibition."

And now for the more particular meaning of the

No-License Resolution. If, by a majority of 55 per cent of the recorded votes (not less than 35 per cent of the electors for the area having voted in favour thereof) the Resolution is carried in any area, the grocers' license and the drinking bar go out of existence. The cause of Temperance reaps the enormous benefit that this entails, for the serious temptations to secret drinking offered by the one, and the scandals of the streets so largely caused by the other, are immediately swept away.

This is not all, however. The licensing authorities, and, be it noted, the same licensing authorities as we have at present, may in any area issue fresh licenses for inns or restaurants, where, as in the Carlisle experiment, any one may have beer, wine, or spirits with his meals. It is true that the premises of such a public-house or restaurant must be structurally adapted to the provision of food; but the almost sure result of the passing of the No-License Resolution would be that a certain number of the public-houses would, in their own interests, alter their premises so as to meet the demands of the Act, and that these public-houses would go on with their business under a new and reformed system in May 1921, when the Resolution will come into force. Things would indeed work out very much as they did in the Carlisle area experiment; and the "Trade," which, in many instances, seems sincerely desirous of doing its work in a better atmosphere, would be given the opportunity of fulfilling the aspirations which many of its members have recently expressed in regard to reform.

And here an interesting point may be noted. After the expiration of the first year of the new restaurant license, the proprietor of what we may call the Reformed Public-house must satisfy the licensing authorities, through the figures shown by the excise, that he has not made more than two-fifths of his profits from the sale of alcoholic liquors.[1] This provision, which seems to have been somewhat overlooked so far, should work out, it seems to us, in such a way as to make the limitation most felt precisely where it is most needed. It surely means that where the inn, hotel, or restaurant makes large profits through the provision of lodgings, food, &c., this enactment will be little felt; while in the lower districts of great cities for instance, where the whole profit must be made on those very meals with which "drink" is provided, there will be very real restriction. If any one wants beer or spirits with his meal, he may have it; but, on the other hand, if he only wants

[1] This two-fifth provision is only indirectly mentioned in the Act. The reader is referred to an older Act, which gives this as the condition of the renewal of the restaurant-keeper's license.

beer or spirits, with a biscuit thrown in, it will have to be rather an expensive biscuit.

It must be admitted that the No-License Resolution is far from perfect. It goes too far for some of us, and not far enough for others. It is not free from a suspicion of class legislation, although on this head it may be noted that the Independent Labour Party has recently, by a majority, voted in its favour. It removes drinking-bars and grocers' licenses without compensation, and it is so hedged about with "buts" and "excepts" that it practically leaves the situation in the hands of the licensing authorities — a body that has not always been so wholeheartedly in favour of Temperance as some of us would desire.

With all its faults, however, it is the only measure of temperance reform now before the country. An interesting article, which appeared in the November number of 'Mags,' advocated State Purchase as an amendment to the 1913 Act. Scotland did not, however, rise to this idea, and although it is being discussed for England, there is no suggestion of its being offered to us Scots at present. Neither does the country appear to be ripe for Prohibition. Whatever might have been the case in the early days of the war, it seems certain that Scotland is not now inclined to follow America's example. Rightly or wrongly, she does not wish to go "dry." Half a loaf, however, is surely, in the present instance, better than no bread, and the objections before mentioned are not, after all, insuperable. Since the Act gives the whole matter into the hands of the electorate, the working man will not vote for "No-License" unless he likes it. As a matter of fact, when in 1887 a plebiscite of the city of Edinburgh was taken on the subject of Prohibition, the largest number of votes for the closing of the public-house was recorded in the poorest part of the city, and the smallest in the West End, where the miseries connected with the present system were known only to the imagination. As to the hardship entailed by the publican and licensed grocer, they, after all, have had seven years of warning and of plenty in which to insure against loss; the licensed grocer, moreover, loses only part of his trade, and the publican may reconstruct his premises and turn restaurant-keeper. To add to this, the whole thing is in the nature of an experiment, and need only last for three years, a reflection which should make an appeal to the canny Scot; while, as a guide to possibilities, it is interesting to remember that Ontario tried the same experiment many years ago, and that when, after three and a half years, she had an opportunity of going back to the old conditions, the demands for Repeal were almost negligible.

If, then, the Act is a real

compromise, why should not all fair-minded members of the community unite in supporting it? Might not the "Trade" itself consider whether it is ever likely to secure better terms than those offered to it now?

Whether we like it or not, we have henceforth to reckon with a dry America. What the effect of the action of the United States may be no one can exactly tell for some time to come. Ten or fifteen years ago the State of Kentucky was famed for its blue grass, its magnificent breed of horses, and above all for its whisky. It was a very "wet" State indeed. When it decided on local option, and the little town of Richmond in the heart of it voted for total prohibition, the dissentients raised up their voices in horror, and the most gloomy prophecies were made as to the effects of such a step. Trade, it was declared, would desert Richmond altogether, for labour would naturally leave a town where no alcohol was procurable for others close at hand, where it was to be had as before. The result of the experiment was as surprising as it was remarkable. Within a few years the trade of Richmond had increased to such an extent that it was pointed out as a model of prosperity. People flocked into the city, and whole streets of new houses had to be erected. Money poured into the banks, and the Corporation were able to spend huge sums in improvements, while crime so diminished that three policemen sufficed to deal with the ill-doers.

Now, it is just possible that, although in this case the experiment was on too small a scale to alter trade conditions in the country generally, the effect of a "dry" and enormously prosperous America upon the "wet" countries of the Old World may be so great, that ten years hence the labouring and business men of this country may, if in the interval there is no drastic reform of our drinking customs, themselves demand total prohibition as their one means of economic self-defence. The No-License clause may well be the last bulwark of the "Trade" against Total Prohibition.

Whatever our views on Temperance, we cannot afford to face the social and industrial problems that have come on us as an aftermath of the war with the old incubus of drink pressing upon our shoulders.

Keen prohibitionists are apt to talk as if it were the desire, as well as the interest of the "Trade," to have as drunken a Scotland as possible; but so far is this from being the case, that many brewers, distillers, and retail traders sincerely deplore excessive drinking, and would fain lift their business above the degradation associated with it. In 1899 the majority report on licensing, containing the following striking statement, was signed by eight leading members of the "Trade":—

"It is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation." The point at issue between such men and the teetotaller is not drunkenness, but moderation. No right-minded man wants excess. It is on the methods by which to attain sobriety that many of us differ.

The prohibitionists, as well as the "Trade," will have in reality a good deal to give up. After all, their dream of making a nation sober by Act of Parliament is a fair one, and not nearly so historically impossible as many people seem to think. In the ancient world, Rome, through the firmest and most drastic laws, practised total prohibition for a period of 500 years of prosperity; while in regard to one of the newest States of the New World, Kansas, the writer of the article in 'Blackwood' before referred to says: "Kansas has 103 counties; in 84 of these counties there are no paupers; in 85 there are no prisoners; and in 87 there are no lunatics. Her banks and barns are full to overflowing. Some of the counties have had no criminal prosecutions for ten years, and the death-rate is the lowest of any nation on the earth." Small wonder, perhaps, that some of us, who have known most nearly what Drink has cost us in the past, and the needless suffering and wholesale loss of life for which it was responsible during the war, should turn from such a dream with reluctance and regret.

Yet though all lovers of their country are agreed on the necessity for reform, we would point out that reform will not come automatically next November: unless the electorate are sufficiently awakened to the needs of the situation to go to the polling-booth and to record their votes, we shall sink back into pre-war conditions. "He trespasses upon his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy."

Already, with the removal of the war restrictions, criminal prosecutions and prosecutions for cruelty to children have gone up by leaps and bounds. To return to our old drinking customs is unthinkable. Liberty, temperance, self-control are the normal ideals of our faith, and Prohibition is itself a compromise. Yet liberty may become a mockery, and such restrictions as are offered by the No-License Resolution of the Temperance Act may give us back more than they take away.

Among the early memories of the present writer is that of a doctor in a remote district of the Highlands, who lost his practice through drink. He was a man of brilliant parts, and being also something of a sardonic humourist, it occurred to him to make up for the loss of his income by taking inebriate patients.

His advertisements to this end met with marked success, and he soon had a little bevy of paying guests. It was his custom to welcome each newcomer into strictly teetotal surroundings, but in a week or two, when the patient had begun to feel at home, the doctor would remark genially that it was time he was learning to *resist*. He would accordingly order in large quantities of the fiery spirit, and he and his guests were in the habit of finishing this part of the experiment under the table.

This makes an excellent tale of a somewhat grim humour. Yet the reflection that, under the present system, we are dealing with the drink problems of our great cities in much the same fashion might well make us pause. In the "Royal Mile" in the city of Edinburgh, between the Castle and Holyrood Palace, there are thirty-nine public-houses and licensed premises. In the Grassmarket, which is about the size of a West End square, there are eight. We are there training the men and women of least strength of will to *resist!*

In these days of 1920 there are daily drifting by these public-houses, thousands of the lads who fought and endured for us in the agonies of the great war. They are as yet unemployed, and are restless, disappointed, discouraged. Strange if, as they are demobilised, we can welcome them with nothing better than the repeal of the "No-Treating Order."

Daily, too, the problems of the Labour World become more difficult and more menacing. Opponents of the Act would scare us by a propaganda of posters into the belief that we are arbitrarily closing the doors of the public-houses, and by so doing are making these problems only more dangerous. But the argument is not true to fact, for this precisely is what the Act does not do. On the contrary, it gives the keys of the drinking-bars into the hands of the people of the country, so that they, if they will, may close these particular doors for themselves.

We believe that a large section of the public, when they realise that this, and not Prohibition, is the meaning of the No-License Resolution, will gladly welcome the opportunity of taking their individual part in a reform that has never, in all the history of our country, been more urgently required than it is now.

VIGNETTES.

BY ELLA MACMAHON.

VI. FLYNN.

OFFICIAL records would describe him as "a person having no fixed occupation." But, as a matter of fact, his occupations and pre-occupations were manifold and various, while among them there was one quite fixed and immovable. That, alas, was what has been poetically described as the pursuit of the vine! Not that Flynn knew or cared much about the vine, or its succulent fruit, the grape, except in so far as the latter yielded liquid; anything liquid, he boasted, he could drink, with the sole exception of water.

That he could not swallow.

"Ye'll understand me," he would explain with ingenuous gravity, "that it's not because I'm the least objectin' to it, but because it turns me stomach."

But it was to the golden liquor distilled by the famous firm of John Jameson that Flynn's heart was closely bound; although he was no bigot where whisky was concerned, and, failing the greater, would take of the lesser distillers with complete broad-mindedness.

During the interludes of his fixed pursuit, he worked about on people's places. In harvest-time, when autumn gardens needed digging and autumn leaves sweeping up, when the plough was going over the land, when the hay was making, when the "thrashers" and the threshing-machine were in the yard—on all these occasions Flynn found occupation. Withal he lived a somewhat vagrant existence, even though he dwelt in the house of his mother, who was a widow, and the mother of another son as well. This other, Flynn's brother, was a carpenter, and a person of sterling respectability. It was said, indeed, that in his extreme youth Flynn's brother "could take a drop," but that a "mission" had converted him. Gossip added that he was a pleasanter "fella" before that than he had ever been since. Be this as it may, geniality was certainly not a marked characteristic of Flynn's brother, nor did they dwell together as brethren in that unity extolled by the Psalmist. In company with his brother, Flynn had taken the pledge, being ever willing to oblige; but the luck, as he himself averred, being always "agin" him, he had had the misfortune to be caught, not long after his solemn renunciation, with the neck of a whisky-bottle sticking out of his coat pocket. In spite of this damning evidence, and the yet further evidence of the spirituous

aroma exhaled by his breath, he added falsehood to his broken pledge, in a solemn asseveration to the priest in question that the bottle contained "nothing in the worrld but a drop of holy water borrowed out of the chapel for to cure the cough on his mother's chest."

Ingenious though this may have been, it availed him nothing, and henceforth his relations with the clergy became slightly strained.

Owing to circumstances never clearly explained, Flynn got into the war. His brother declared that the police took him when he was drunk, and he never knew another ha'porth about it till he woke up at the front! This explanation, although displaying on the face of it glaring improbabilities, possibly contained a germ of truth. The fact remains that Flynn enlisted in a service battalion of one of the Irish regiments, and in due course went forth with a certain Irish Division to find himself upon the stricken shore of Gallipoli. He lived through that hell to be taken prisoner by the Turks, but not before deeds of gallantry had won for him the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Some months after the Armistice our Flynn returned to us, decorated aforesaid, and demobbed, and bearing upon him the marks of honourable warfare in the shape of what he described as "the hur-rt to the limb," otherwise fragments of shrapnel in his right leg. During the years which the locust of war had eaten, his mother had died. He came back to the old home to find her chair empty, and not only her chair but her feather-bed empty likewise. The brothers, still bachelors, were not better stable companions than of yore. Indeed, a raging conflict sprang up almost immediately over the mother's feather-bed. Flynn swore that from the time of his earliest childhood his mother had promised to leave him her feather-bed. Feather-beds in Ireland are domestic bequests of high value, forming as they often do the substantial part of a girl's dowry, or an offering meet from a bridegroom to his bride. The late Mrs Flynn's feather-bed was reckoned one of the finest in the whole barony. Possession being as we are assured nine points of the law, or if not, at any rate, a distinct advantage, Flynn's brother refused not only to give Flynn the feather-bed, but to allow him to sleep on it. Feeling ran high, for there were not wanting many who supported Flynn's contention as against his brother, adding that "all the world knew" that Flynn had been his mother's favourite. For some time this internecine strife, after the manner of its kind, found vent in verbal dispute of incessant and acrimonious repetition. In spite of what had gone before, Flynn had the temerity to appeal to the parish priest to support his claim; but the reverend gentleman seemed scarcely avid to arbitrate. Moreover, Flynn's

brother fell back not merely upon the right of possession but upon the claimant's apostasy in fighting for the Enemy of his country — an accusation which Flynn denied, with many oaths.

"Give me me rights, give me me mother's feather-bed," was his daily iteration.

"I'll *not*," was the diurnal reply: "let ye go now and get a feather-bed from the English Gover-mint. 'Tis the lovely one they ought to give ye for fightin' the Germans for them."

"Ah, don't be botherin' me. Ye know well enough I never fought the Germans, nor wouldn't, for no one."

"Augh! An' who did ye fight?"

"I've told ye till I'm sick and tired of tellin' ye. I fought the Turks, haythen Turks; 'faith ye'd fight them yerself if ye seen them comin' at ye in black haythen hordes, so ye would, for all yer so careful of yer ould yalla skin."

"Ah, ye may say what ye like, ye have a dirty ould English medal in yer poeket!"

"I have not; that's a lie anyhow. There's no medal in me poeket."

There was not. It was in the pawnshop.

"I don't care where it is: ye had it, and ye got it, and ye can't deny ye got it; an' what did ye get it for if it wasn't for——"

"Ah, shut yer mouth; sure don't ye know very well 'twasn't *my* fault, I couldn't help gettin' it. Could I go and lave poor Tim Dooley— an' he powerless—with them leppin' divils of Turks firing on him! Could I lave him to be kilt dead, and poor Mary his wife and their innocent child cryin' their eyes out for him, and them never to see a sight of him again! Sure that was the whole of it all. Would ye have me run away and lave the poor good quiet Irishman to be conshumed entirely by them — them — black cannibals?"

"Ah, ye may talk, but ye took their ould medal, say what ye like."

"I took it! Glory be to God, and d'ye know anything in the earthly worrld about th' Army! Took it! Bedad, when ye get in there they don't ask ye if ye'll 'take' anything, they give ye what they like, and that's all about it. Give me me mother's feather-bed, and hould yer whisht, and stop gabbin' of what ye know nothin' about."

"Ye may go whistle for it, I'm tellin' ye."

Thus it went on day in day out, until the day when Flynn ate his brother's dinner. The dinner in question happened to be a particularly good one, and had been specially prepared for the brother on his return from a long job some distance away. He was late, and Flynn, coming in, proceeded to wolf every bit of it alone. The last savoury mouthful was even yet in his throat when he for whom it had been destined arrived, and caught Flynn *flagrante delicto*. Thereupon, as the newspapers would express it, a scene of

violence ensued. Tired, hungry, and incensed, Flynn's brother ordered the culprit out of the house once and for all, and would listen to neither excuse nor apology.

"If ye put me out," said Flynn at last, with all the solemnity of utterance befitting a resolution so awful, "I'll lay a CURSE on ye!"

But the brother was proof even against this. "I'll chance the Curse," he retorted grimly: "out ye pop."

And out Flynn popped. The eviction was accompanied by the usual dramatic accessories. For not only was Flynn thrown out, but his personal belongings were thrown after him in the approved method of forcible ejectment.

Each article was the subject of insult as it was flung into the street. Finally, a pair of khaki "slacks" went hurtling through the air, and with them opprobrium reached its climax.

"Go on now," roared Flynn's brother, much to the joy of a hasty assemblage of onlookers, "and take yer blasted English uniform to hell along with ye. I'll not have it pollutin' me honest house any longer."

And having thus accomplished the purgation, he slammed and bolted the door of the honest house aforesaid, to a murmur from the public, wherein sympathy for the greater part, but some disagreement also, were distinctly mingled.

Flynn slept that night in a neighbour's barn with the khaki slacks for a pillow.

The following day, as it happened, was that upon which the instalment of a grateful country's pension became due to him. Having drawn it, he forthwith proceeded, as might be expected, to drown care in the golden bowl of John Jameson. The immersion, however, did not cause him to forget his grievance, nor the string of his tongue to be straitened. On the contrary, the noise of his argumentation rent the air, while he ceased not day or night to revile those who, he believed and declared, had entered into a nefarious conspiracy to defraud him.

Among the latter his whisky-fed imagination included the parish priest. That blameless personage had indeed aroused Flynn's worst suspicions by declining to throw the weight of his influence either to one side or the other. Inflamed by ardent spirits and rankling suspicion, Flynn followed the unfortunate cleric whenever he caught sight of him, and lifting up his voice beyond the bounds of decorum, gave utterance to disrepect so gross as to warrant the terse description of his state given by the village as that of—"terrible mad."

Although the object of these attentions wisely forbore to notice them, it became almost a daily occurrence to see Flynn pursuing his pastor, shouting meanwhile at the top of his voice: "Give me back me mother's feather-bed, ye ould bag of feathers. D'ye hear what I'm sayin' to ye? Ah, ye ould hypo-crat, ye ould bag

of feathers! How dare ye keep me out of me mother's feather-bed?"

The Law, however, at length overtook Flynn with its proverbially long arm. Ninety-six hours in a place of detention restored him to sobriety and a sense of his situation. He was brought forth unresistingly and placed before the judgment-seat—in other words, the court of petty sessions presided over by a benevolent bevy of justices of the peace. Here, in due order, his case was called, and the enormity of his offence gravely detailed. Flynn, now calm, confronted the "Bench" with a deferential and even obsequious air. There was not one of its occupants for whom he had not worked at some time or other and in varied capacity. They, for their part, knew him quite as well as he knew them. In the end, asked by the chairman what he had to say for himself, and why he had insulted his clergyman and broken the peace in a manner so disgraceful and unwarrantable, he replied with ingratiating candour—

"Yer honour's worship, 'tis an exthror-nary thing, but the fact of the matter is, that somehow or other, whenever I do have a drop of drink in me, it always turns to clerical abuse." The face of the "Bench" remained unmoved and composedly stern, nevertheless for the fraction of a second a ripple of light seemed to irradiate it with passing humour.

The decision went in Flynn's favour. Taking into consideration his previous character—in reality his war service, but the magistrates were too prudent to say this openly—they discharged him with a caution. He left the court accordingly a free man, exchanging smiling greetings with those sympathisers who hailed his release with invitations to (liquid) refreshment. These he declined with an inflexibility which would have done justice to a Pussyfoot candidate for a Prohibition Parliament.

Thenceforward our Flynn seemed lost to us. Rumour as to his whereabouts varied; one report asserted he had fled his native village, declaring that only in so doing could he avoid having his broken heart still further lacerated by the daily sight of those "that was robbin' him an' his mother, and she in her grave." Another gave out that he had re-enlisted, but this gained scanty credence.

A little later the following appeared in a London daily paper:—

NEW REIGN OF TERROR IN IRELAND.

"A mysterious description of outrage has just made its appearance in remote parts of the country. It takes the form of kidnapping. A respectable carpenter named Flynn was torn out of his bed a night or two ago by a party of masked and armed men, and having been bound and gagged, was carried to a wood and there deposited, quite naked, save for his night-shirt. The

unfortunate man, who, so far as is known, had no personal enemies in the district, must inevitably have perished of cold and exposure, but that by some extraordinary stroke of good-fortune his brother happened to be passing through the wood at the time and came upon the miscreants and their victim before the former were able to decamp. With great intrepidity this man—who, we understand, is an ex-soldier and fought with much gallantry in the late war, in which he was severely wounded, winning the D.C.M.—attacked his brother's assailants and actually beat them off. He then lost no time in summoning the police, and with their aid conveyed his brother back to his home, where he lies suffering from shock. The occurrence has caused considerable excitement in the district. It is conjectured that the fact that Flynn had his soldier brother living with him recently, incurred for him the enmity of the local branch of Sinn Fein, which is very strong in this part of the country; or it may have been one of the usual raids in search of arms, as the raiders—who, however, could find no weapons of any sort—left the house in much disorder. Some articles of furniture have been broken or damaged, and some are missing, notably a large feather-bed. . . . Interviewed by our representative to-day, the rescuer, who is the D.C.M. hero already mentioned, was modestly reticent about his own prowess, though there is no doubt whatever that his brother owes his life to his brave intervention. As usual, no arrests have been made. . . ."

When I next met our Flynn I inquired for his brother, who was reported to be still "dawny," an adjective signifying weakness or tardy recovery.

"It was a queer business," I ventured. He looked at me with very open gaze.

"It's the Curse workin', that's what it is": his accents were grave. "Ye can never defeat a Curse, an' annywan that tries—God help them! . . ."

THE DREAMERS.

"If you can dream and not make dreams your master,
If you can think, yet not make thought your aim."

—KIPLING.

I. THE SUBALTERN.

"A SORT of glorified jump, Manning, that's really all it is."

The speaker, a tall, thin, soldierly-looking man, with sparse grey hair and keen blue eyes, fumbled in his pocket for a match to relight the cheroot which he had carelessly allowed to go out in the heat of the discussion. An eminently practical man, typical of his years and service, Colonel Smythe had little use or sympathy for dreamers, as he stigmatised people like the subaltern opposite to him, who, sprawling at full length in the ruined archway, was watching the evolutions of a pair of white vultures below them, drifting steadily backward and forward, level with the battlements.

They had driven out from Delhi to look over the old ruins to the south, and the evening found them ensconced in a corner of the walls of Purana Qila, as Humayon's Fort at Indrapat is called locally, while Patricia Smythe manœuvred with the tea-basket.

"But, sir, the gliders have been held in the air for over twenty seconds."

"Only owing to the momentum they started with. It's just like a rifle bullet. If you give enough way to any projectile it will keep up a certain distance in the air. But that's got no relation to bird's flight at all."

"But surely it's the same thing: a plane launched into the air, and gliding through it just like a bird. If only one could keep up the momentum by some means, one could go on indefinitely like the bird does."

"Yes, but you can't, and never will be able to. Man wasn't meant to fly, or he'd have been made differently."

"I don't agree, sir: I think he was meant to do everything —in time; the question is, how near we've got to the time for flying. Personally, I think we're just on it." He stopped thoughtfully. "And when we do stumble on it, it's going to revolutionise things a bit."

"Pass me the teapot, please, Mr Manning: the kettle's just boiling."

The girl's clear voice broke in on the discussion, and Manning, sitting up, pulled the tea-basket towards him.

"Here you are, Miss Smythe; I'm sorry for not assisting, I was so busy arguing."

"Oh, you'll never convince Dad. I've tried, and it's no go. He's certain men weren't made for flight, and so that settles it for good and all.

You never dream dreams, do you, Dad?"

"Lucky for you I don't, Pat. One wants some practical brains in a family of hopeless dreamers like you and your mother."

"All the same, you wouldn't like us if we didn't dream, Dad: think of Mum's becoming practical—Heavens!"

She poured the boiling water into the teapot and stirred it, while Manning passed over the milk and sugar—a slim slip of a girl in a biscuit-coloured tussore frock, with heavy coils of auburn hair gleaming under the shady brim of the white panama splashed with the vivid green of a silk veil twisted round it.

Such a fresh dainty-looking girl, with nice, clear, honest, hazel eyes and a rather adorable mouth, thought Manning, as he watched her pouring out the tea, sitting up in the shade of the old stone archway which looked out through the thickness of the walls on to the sun-kissed panorama of dome and minaret and yellow soil. A charming picture, with the light falling on face and straight well-poised neck, a shaft of sunlight from a crevice just catching the heavy jade and gold earring.

She passed over a cup to Manning and one to Colonel Smythe, and helped herself to a piece of cake.

"Why *are* you such an unbelieving Jew, Daddy? Why shouldn't men be beginning to fly, as Mr Manning says they are?"

"Because, my dear, it's theoretically and practically impossible. Man's not constructed for it: he's meant to move about on the earth."

"What about the sea? He manages to move about on and *under* that all right, Dad."

"That's different: he's not acting against gravity there, whereas to fly, except in some form of balloon, he's got to counteract gravity, and that's the secret he can't find."

"How does the bird do it, sir, anyway? We know something about it. He's got to push himself through the air, and the reaction of the air on the wings holds him up. If we can make wings and push them through the air, we ought to get the same result."

"Too much weight to carry in the first place. The bird weighs practically nothing at all, and is specially built for flight—for movement in its own element, the air."

"We could build our flying-machines on the same lines."

"And then they'll break up and drop you with a bump."

"All right, sir—you wait and see. But I'll bet you anything you like that we shall be flying within the next ten years."

Manning sat up and passed his cigarette-case over. "Cigarette, Miss Smythe?" He lit it for her, and then lighting his own, asked—

"Who's for climbing the gate?"

"Not me, thanks, Manning," said Colonel Smythe; "I've climbed enough broken stairs to-day."

"Will you come, Miss Smythe?" asked the subaltern, turning to the girl.

"Yes, love to," she said, "and Dad can pack up the tea things." She stood up and brushed the crumbs and dust from her frock.

"I utterly refuse to pack up any tea things," replied the Colonel, extending himself luxuriously. "I shall lie here in peace and comfort with a cheroot while you two young idiots go and climb impossible stairs to get exactly the same view as I get here."

"It's much better higher up, sir."

"Well, I'll wait till your flying-machine is going, thanks."

"Be a good girl, Pat, and don't break your neck if you can help it," he added as she stepped out into the sunlight on to the broken old stone stairs leading to the upper battlements, where the rose-red gate-towers of carved stone stabbed the vivid blue of the sky.

Manning followed the slim figure that stepped so steadily on the very edge of nothing, until they reached the top of the high gate-towers, where two little stone "chattri" pavilions of carved red granite, still gay with inlay of blue and green tiling, lent an air of dainty finish to the massive strength of the gates rising in double tier well over eighty feet of sheer smooth-cut ashlar, topped with the warmer red of old Moghul brick.

The girl climbed into one of them, and resting one shapely arm on the red stone where the gold bracelet glinted vividly, pointed out over the wide landscape—tomb and tower and ruined palace.

"Dreams of dead kings, Mr Manning. Isn't it fascinating? I wonder what the man who built this fort thought when he stood here and looked out. Do you think he pictured this lying ruined, and you and me standing here, 'strangers within the gates'?"

"He must have had some dim foresight, since he had imagination enough to design this place. But I suppose he said to himself, 'It'll last my time, and his, and theirs, and the rest is with Allah.'".

"Seven cities . . ." murmured the girl as her eyes swept over the plain . . . "and now . . ."

"Tumbledown tombs and crumbling arches," said Manning, "but, which is eternal, roses. I picked that one at Humayon's Gardens." He held out a great, heavy-scented, yellow rose.

The girl took it and held it to her nostrils. "How lovely! Why do they always have such topping flowers in those old gardens?"

"'I sometimes think that never blows
the rose so red
As where some buried Cæsar bled,'"

quoted Manning. "Rose-petal perfume of past grandeur. No, it's for you," he said, as she offered it him back.

"Oh, thanks awfully." She pinned it into her dress with an enamel brooch.

She pointed out in front.

"Look at that vulture coming down wind." The great bird swept past them noiselessly, and turning into the wind, hovered over the battlements awhile and then swept back again.

"That's real flight, Miss Smythe, and you and I will do it yet: do it soon now, too, I think. We shall fly over this very place with its atmosphere of dreams and lazy sunkissed hours."

"You do really believe it, don't you, Mr Manning? It's not only to make Dad argue?"

"Of course I do. The Wrights have shown that it's possible, and all we've got to do is to make it really practicable."

"And then what is there left? We shall be like Alexander, with no more worlds to conquer."

"Not in reality. Man's found out about one-millionth of what there is to be found out, and the discovery of another millionth won't finish everything. But it's going to revolutionise war when it does come."

The girl looked at him. "I wish it could revolutionise it out of existence," she said.

"I'm afraid it won't do that yet," he replied gravely. "But we're getting on pretty fast. Think! Three hundred years ago Humayon stood on this very gate watching his troops marching out, horse and foot and elephants, all in clinking clattering mail. You and I, perhaps, will stand on this gate and watch the troops of the future passing by, not horse and foot and elephants, but horse and foot and birds—chiefly birds, great birds sweeping past, with the glint of brass and steel over the gleaming fabric of their wings, and the dull blue of machine-guns and pompoms. When that comes, the horse and foot will begin to go and wars be won in the air."

The voice was full of enthusiasm, and the speaker's face held the far-off rapt look of one who gazes from the high hills over a new strange country, yet one which seems half familiar from being so often visualised in the lonely halts of the long upclimb.

The girl looked at him in wonderment. What funny things men were. Why did they sometimes suddenly wander out into the blue like that, where you couldn't follow them? It was bad enough now with "shows" and expeditions on which they vanished periodically. If they could fly off into the skies as well, poor woman might give up trying to hold them at all. Unless—why not?—she should go with them, lend grace and lightness as well as lissom strength to the great wings. Why shouldn't a woman do as much as a man in that line? Surely if flight were to come, woman might claim her equal right of wings to soar above the dust and haze into the higher clearer level where legendary has always held her sphere to be.

The thought fired her. Why shouldn't she try the new road with this dreamer?

"Will you teach me some-

thing about it, Billy? I'd love to learn."

He came back to earth with a jump. It was very rarely that she called him Billy.

"*Rather*," he stammered; "but do you really want to learn?"

He had learnt from bitter experience to keep his hobby to himself on most occasions, for it bored the majority of people to tears.

"Honour bright, I'd love to. I'm not fooling. I do really want to understand all about it."

So Manning launched forthwith into the elemental facts of the cambered wing and its action in the air, its wonders and its paradoxes, making his subject live as only one who loves it can, while the great white vultures and the curved-winged kites swam past on motionless outstretched wings, with slow lazy turnings of their heads, to look at the two engrossed figures in the rose-red pavilion, until Colonel Smythe came shouting up the stairs to ask if they wanted to spend the whole night there.

As they went down the broken steps the girl's head was in a whirl with angles of incidence and relative speeds and negative pressures; but the boy's head was also in a whirl with just something else, for "Parler de soi à celle qu'on aime, c'est presque parler amour," and talking of flight was to Manning practically "parler de soi," and—well—Pat was—Pat.

II. THE DAWN OF REALISATION.

The squadron commander sat up and looked at his wrist-watch. "It's about time they started over," he said. "You've got a new roll of films in, Pat, haven't you? I'm very keen to have that snap of a bus just clearing the gate."

"Yes, dear. I put one in before we started. The light's just right this evening, and if they come low down we ought to get a first-class picture. Do you remember when we sat on the gate tower and talked of possibilities, and you said that one day we would look out from here and see the troops of the future—horse and foot and birds?"

"I should think I do, Pat, darling. I began to hope that day." He clasped the cool hand she laid on his shoulder as she sat leaning against one of the stone pillars of the pavilion on the Sher Mandal in Purana Qila. "And because hope sprang up, I forthwith began to babble hectically about angles of incidence and cambers and centres of pressure."

"One can make love in most languages and dialects, I think, dear. You used to be really quite good at doing it in a terminology of lift-drift ratios, I remember," she smiled reminiscently. "Anyway, it was good for me, since

it made me realise that if a woman wishes to be a real companion to a man instead of a plaything for his leisure moments, she's got to take an interest in the things he's working at, and a little understanding is essential to interest. Then you'll get on towards sex-equality and real companionship. Like the Brownings, for instance."

"Well, you've got it, Pat, darling, haven't you? There's precious little about flight that *you* don't understand. You generally lead the way now."

"No, I don't, dear, but I've learnt to share your dreams a bit, especially the great one. Do you think we're tumbling on the edge of things a little now?"

Billy Manning sat up and pointed to a kite wheeling round over the Qila Kuhna Mosque, the slow spirals bringing him past the Sher Mandal every half-minute or so.

"Never a tremor of wing except just the flexing and twisting of the tips for balance as one uses one's ailerons. And yet he not only keeps in horizontal flight but climbs steadily. We know what his wing is: the same cambered 'plane we use ourselves; we know its action, and we know that to secure lift from the air that wing must be driven through it at a certain minimum speed, a speed that you and I have calculated out dozens of times. We know that if the relative speed drops below that figure the lift will fall and the bird must glide down. There's nothing visible driving him through the air—he's stopped his engine so to speak, no longer flapping his wings—and yet he maintains sufficient flying speed to go on climbing continuously and circling by the half-hour. You can't assume that his original momentum keeps him going, because if you do you're abolishing air resistance and getting perpetual motion.

"Therefore, one comes back always to the same conclusion, that some unknown force must be driving him through the air at a relative speed, high enough to give him a margin of lift and climb."

"I know, dear: we've worked it out dozens of times and always come back to that. But what? . . . what? . . . what?"

"God only knows!" said Billy. "He made the cambered wing that we've copied, and He made the bird; and now He's left us to find out, as He always does. That's what we were given brains for."

"Is it heat or is it light or is it electricity?" said Pat reflectively. "Some force produced by the bird itself which sends it forward; some alteration in pressure front and rear. I suppose we *shall stumble* on it some day."

"Some one . . . somewhere . . . some day," said Billy. "Perhaps you and I, Pat—who knows? It won't be for lack of searching." He threw a stone at the kite as it sailed by six feet away. The bird checked, swerved, and dived and zoomed back

into level flight again. "We'll do that better than you soon, my friend," he said.

A faint, far-off, humming vibration of the air, felt rather than heard, caused them to look up over the walls to where, against the *eau-de-nil* sky, three aircraft showed like midges.

"There they are," said Pat, getting to her feet and unstrapping the camera. "'Horse and foot and . . . birds.' I wonder if the dust of dead kings is stirred?"

The aeroplanes drew nearer, B.E.2s, prehistoric machines to Western eyes, but the last word in flying for India. They swung out on a circle to Humayon's tomb, and then turning, bore down on Indrapat, looking like long thin dragon-flies gleaming in the sinking sun.

"I told Adam to come low over the South Gate," said Pat, as she focussed the camera. Adam Smythe was her cousin, a keen lad fresh from home, who had recently been posted to Billy's squadron. I thought that would give us a real fascinating photo, the wall and gates of the city of dead kings and 'planing above them, the living realisation of mankind's eternal dream."

"It's a fine symbol, dear, and it's good for mankind to see its dreams realised sometimes, even if only partly, lest it lose heart altogether. Look out; here he comes."

The leading 'plane swooped down to the gate, the pilot pulling her up at the last moment—clearing the gate tower by bare inches, it seemed.

"Good lad," murmured Manning, who liked to see clean well-judged work. "Got him, Pat?"

"Nicely, thank you," she replied, as she turned on the film.

The whole amphitheatre of the old walls seemed full of sound as the machines circled low above them, and the steady hum of the engines woke the kites to remonstrance as one 'plane even lower than the rest swept past the Sher Mandal, Pat waving back in response to the observer's raucous greeting on the Klaxon.

She secured another snap of one that swept round over the mosque, and a final one as Adam Smythe, cart-wheeling above the west gate, slid back over the river and then banked left-handed towards Delhi Fort, the other two close behind.

"Well, Pat, there's some display for the ghosts of the old kings. I wonder if Baber and Humayon and Akbar are anywhere about at the moment? I'm sure Akbar would have been as keen as nuts to see that display."

"Or Baber, who held that no knowledge could come amiss to a king," said Pat, closing the camera.

"They were a sporting lot anyway," remarked Billy, as he seated himself on the edge of the low circling wall. I think these old buildings of theirs always seem friendly to people like you and me, dreamers of dreams."

He watched the 'planes turn west towards the aerodrome out at New Cantonments, and pointed to the white blur that marks Imperial Delhi.

"The eighth city," he said. "I wonder if Qutb-ud-Din Aybek gets up o' nights to look at it from Mahrauli, or Tughlak Shah from *his* ruined city, or Prithvi Raj from the tumbled walls by the Qutb, and how long they give it to last.

'After me cometh a builder,
Tell him, I, too, have known.'

Myself I prefer this; they knew how to build in those days, and didn't inflict 'temporary' rubbish on one. I'll bet the Lath will outlast the eighth city, as it's outlasted the other seven."

A car rumbled in under the massive archway, and a short fat man got out and walked up towards the Sher Mandal.

"Capt. Walker," said Pat. "He said he might be out this way to-night, so I told him to look for us here."

He came up the plinth and waved to the Mannings.

"Come up and have drinks," called Pat. "You're too late for tea."

"Ta muchly," he shouted, and vanished into the staircase built in the thickness of the wall to emerge presently on the top.

"What's the stunting display for? Some one going on leave?"

"No; only a special séance for the wife who wanted some allegorical photos of the old walls with a bus over them. Sort of 'bridge-the-centuries' picture."

Walker settled himself in comfort with a long peg and lit a cheroot.

"Interesting lecture that of yours last night, Major, but I don't follow the part about the birds when you said we're not flying really, only making a fictitious imitation. Surely the cases are not parallel. The bird is a living thing in its own element, and that makes all the difference."

"But the fact of its being the bird's element, as you call it, can't alter the fundamental laws of gravity, of action and reaction, of air pressure and resistance. The fact still remains, that certain classes of birds achieve continuous soaring flight without any apparent expenditure of force; whereas we, to do the same, have to fit a huge engine and expend thousands of foot-pounds of energy. There must be something we haven't found yet."

"And you and Mrs Manning are going to find it? Well, wish you luck; but I think you're looking for the impossible. Besides, even if it does exist and you find it, what will it enable you to do that our modern machines can't?"

"Save weight firstly—the weight of the engine and fuel; secondly, make a reliable machine instead of an unreliable one; and thirdly, give us the silent aeroplane. The next war is going to be won in the air; and an absolutely reliable silent machine with no engine to go wrong and the weight of the engine

put into armouring and armament, is going to knock every other kind of bus out of sky. And then God help civil population of the losers, for they'll get it night and day until they chuck their hand in! Five hundred conventions won't stop it, now that every one has realised that the old idea of armies is dead—armies as opposed to non-combatants, that is. Now and henceforward wars are going to be the affair of the whole nation."

Walker looked at him. "Go it, Major. Fancy enthusing like that!"

Manning smiled. "Rather diffusion of words to the mouth, I'm afraid; but it's my pet lunacy, and the mem-sahib shares it."

"But," put in Walker, "I thought wars were going to be off in the future. League of Nations; eternal embracings, &c., &c."

"I think not, until we render war so utterly terrible that no nation will dare to make it. When you execute the nation that goes to war, as you hang the man who cuts his neighbour's throat, methodically and inexorably, *then* war will go out of fashion; and there, it seems to me, that the perfected aeroplane is the obvious instrument to suppress war. If, for instance, on Germany starting war in 1914, we had been in a position to own the skies and send over enough well-equipped perfect aircraft to blot out methodically the country from the German border eastward, mile after mile, hour after hour, with explosive and gas, the war would not have lasted a week."

"I don't think that would ever be possible. Whatever one side turns out with in the way of new frightfulness, the other side is sure to find a counter. It is only the old old story of the gun and the armour."

"Yes, but it wants time to find the counter-measure. My point is that, if some nation finds out a revolutionising secret like that of true flight, and keeping it really secret get their blow in first without a shadow of warning, the other side will never recover in time to find a remedy."

"Well, I hope it won't come in my time. I prefer the old-fashioned cut-and-thrust type of game with a certain amount of sport in it. Cold-blooded elimination of the other bird doesn't appeal to me. But to come back to our muttons: do you honestly believe there is still some undiscovered force, as you made out in your lecture?"

"Every time. It's the only thing that explains an otherwise inexplicable phenomenon."

"Don't you think that perhaps it's a question of ascending currents of air? I've noticed kites and ravens soaring in the hills over re-entrants, where the mist, driving up, showed an unmistakable upward wind."

"Yes, possibly in some cases that is so. And certainly kites like hovering round a natural breakwater where the wind

must drive up, as you can see any day over Delhi Fort walls. But that doesn't explain the birds you see climbing up and up, without ever a beat of wing, in a hot dead calm."

"Probably the heated air is ascending and taking them up although there is no wind showing."

"All right in theory, but hardly practicable, because as a rule the upward speed of the air would nowhere near suffice to keep the bird in even horizontal flight, assuming him to be gliding with gravity as his motive power, still less to carry him upward, even after allowing for his head resistance being far less than that of any type of aeroplane yet built. A very strong wind deflected sharply upwards, as by a high wall, could do it within a limited area under favourable conditions, but you don't get that where you see the birds circling up on a still day in the plains, for instance."

"Well, I don't understand it, but I think you're on an impossible quest myself. When you can make feathers and flesh and blood you might find it, always assuming that there is anything to find, which, mind you, I don't by any means concede yet."

"Anyhow, it doesn't cost anything, and it interests us no end, and that's something these days. Talking of interest, what about the prospects of leave?"

"Fairish to good. Me for Chamba and the little bears next month. Three months of the best, I hope. I'm bored to death with taking Members of Council for joy-rides, and talking shop about 'commercial aviation' to greasy profiteers in the intervals of doing postman. What are you two going to do in the leave line?"

"Laze in a house-boat on the Wular and then drift up to Gandarbal, and after that trek up beyond Sonamarg. Think of the far snows, and the swirl of ice-water down the Sinde valley!"

Pat stood up and looked north-east over the plain, where the rim of the sky was rapidly darkening, the blue deepening to indigo and dusky purple as the radiance died out of the western sky. High overhead a flight of cranes barred the sky, ghostly in the fading light.

"Time for home, isn't it, Mrs Manning?" said Walker. "It's getting late and you're dining with me before the show to-night."

"All right. Call up the coolie—will you, please?—for the things," she replied mechanically.

"What are you looking at, child?" asked Billy. Walker was busy shouting to the coolie below.

"Nothing. Only wondering what it was like, when they stood here and looked out to the north for the invader, year after year, century after century. Can't you picture the old-time sentries leaning on their spears watching, and the wailing women on the walls staring out into the dusk, with the horizon stabbed by the ever-nearing spears of

yellow flame from burning hut and byre as the terror drew closer! The last frantic efforts, the sorties, the final culminating horror of the assault with the gateways choked with dead and dying as the stormers, drunk with lust of blood, swept in in a scurry of steel.

"And now we stand here with half a world talking of endless peace as though men's passions had radically changed. But *I* think I can feel the dread still, out of the north as ever—vast, formless, menacing."

She shivered slightly. "Stupid, aren't I, Billy, dear? Be glad you're not a woman."

She turned and followed Walker down the steep stone steps. "Mind you don't imitate old Humayon, Captain Walker, and take all the steps in one," she said with a light laugh. "Even Billy's unknown force wouldn't help you then."

III. THE BLUE 'PLANES.

In the first light of the dawn, two men were standing on the aerodrome at New Delhi. The elder of the two, a man of medium height, with blue eyes and grey moustache, wore General's badges on his Flying Corps kit. He limped slightly when he walked, but his face was keen and his bearing alert, and he was young-looking for his rank.

He turned to the other man, a subaltern, who was ruefully surveying the aerodrome. It seemed to have suffered considerably, being methodically ploughed up with bomb-craters until there was barely a clear fifty-yard run in any direction. Behind them a row of temporary hangars appeared to have shared the damage, two of them being little more than twisted girders and charred timbers.

"Lucky we had that underground hangar ready last night, Bob. I wonder they didn't try this aerodrome before."

"Hardly worth their while, I suppose, sir. It's more amusing to shoot us out of the skies than wrecking our landing-grounds. And both forms of amusement are equally safe for them, since our machines are, if possible, as antediluvian as our Archies."

The subaltern's tone was wrathfully despondent, and with good reason. The unexpected war had found India with but a few squadrons of machines, intended only for work against tribesmen, and utterly outclassed by the enemy's aircraft, thanks to his new petrol turbine-engines, which gave twice the power for weight of any other nation's. The enormous success of his carefully-guarded secret had probably been one of the contributing factors to his sudden declaration of war—a war sought for the destruction of our civilisation and all it stands for.

New machines were being

rushed out from home, but could not be expected for another ten days at the earliest, even provided that the Canal remained open. Concentration was consequently being hampered in every way, for the Indian 'planes had been simply swept out of the air, and all day long, and every day, the bridges and main railway junctions were alive with bursting bombs, and heavy with drifting gas-clouds; while at night the burning wreckage of trains and dumps gave the enemy 'planes the most useful of guiding lights.

The enormously-increased range of aircraft placed Delhi within reach of the larger machines; and being the capital and an important railway centre, the enemy visited it regularly. During the six days that operations had lasted they only lost one 'plane, and that due more to Archie's luck than good judgment. The native population had largely fled out into the districts where, as in plague-time, the country-side was scattered all over with little encampments wherein the fat Delhi banias sat shivering, while the blue 'planes circled overhead, dropping an occasional gas-bomb for the pleasure of seeing an encampment break up. The people, however, had learnt by now not to come back after the bomb had burst, but to wait until the evening winds had cleared the haze where the contorted, blue-lipped remains lay.

"I'll just go over and explain things to the pioneers, sir," continued the subaltern. "They ought to get a short run clear for you very soon now. Lahore's not reported sighting the beasts yet."

"I'll walk over too and have a look at the 'Hawk,'" replied the General.

At one corner of the aerodrome a working party of Madras pioneers were putting the finishing touches to a ramp running down below ground, evidently leading to some kind of large dug-out. A camouflage screen just removed had hitherto concealed the entrance from above. At the bottom of the ramp two mechanics were sliding back steel doors which revealed an electrically-lighted concrete-walled shed.

General Manning walked down and entered the shed, leaving Bob Trevor in consultation with the subaltern of pioneers, who was supervising the clearance of a run between the bomb-craters.

Inside the dug-out, or hangar as it really was, stood a grey biplane of an altogether new type. It possessed no propeller, nor as far as could be seen any engine. The wings, folded back on either side, were ridged on top from front to back with laminated plates of a peculiar grey metal; while on the under side, let into the featherweight metal skin which, both on fuselage and wings, replaced the fabric of earlier models, ran row upon row of transparent celluloid tubes enclosing metal filaments.

In some respects the machine

approximated to a largish scout type, but thanks to the lack of propeller, the under-carriage was lower than usual. By means of rather ingenious locking levers the pilot could draw it up when in flight, so that it closed upward and forward into recesses in the under side of the fuselage, and resistance became practically nil.

The centre section of the fuselage consisted of an armoured cockpit of bullet-proof aero-steel, fitted with a stream-lined cover which could be slid over the top at will, closing the cockpit entirely except for a horizontal slit all round for view. When closed the pilot was practically immune from danger as regards machine-gun fire.

The controls were of the conventional type, and the instruments normal, except that the rev. counter was replaced by a dial marked "Power" and divided off into a reading of pounds' pressure per square foot. Enclosed in the cockpit were a pair of machine-guns with belts set with armour-piercing, soft-nosed, and incendiary bullets alternately. Between the machine-guns at the very bottom of the fuselage was a short-barrelled automatic gun, firing a one-pound shell. The extending practice of armouring the engine and tanks, and the pilot's seat, in all except the very lightest machines, had rendered imperative the necessity for some heavier weapon than the rifle-calibered machine-guns.

The teleaxial gear enabled the gunner to aim his guns by the aligning of a small sighting telescope so connected with the guns that they moved in accordance with its movements, the axes of guns and telescope always remaining parallel. Check-stops prevented the telescope from being moved beyond the horizontal and vertical radius of action of the guns.

The armament was so calibrated that at fifty yards the strike of the machine-gun bullets coincided exactly with the point of impact of the shells. The idea of thus calibrating and connecting them had been evolved by Trevor, a gunnery enthusiast. The intention was that the percussion-shell should smash up the light armouring, and the accompanying and following flight of incendiary bullets passing through the holes made would complete the work. The armour-piercing bullets might also find weak spots on lightly armoured machines, and the expanding bullets were calculated to do far more damage to struts and cables than would the hardened pointed ones.

The actuating buttons of the guns, with Bowden connections, lay on the joy-stick just under the pilot's fingers, so that either all three or any individual gun could be brought into action as desired.

The cockpit was fitted with all the usual accessories for comfort—racks, electric lighting and heating gear, map-roller cases, and so on.

Billy Manning stepped up

to the machine and spoke to the flight-sergeant, who was examining the instruments.

"Fully charged, Jenkins?" he asked.

"Fully, sir. You've six hours' power without generating at all, but in this weather you'll start generating as soon as you leave the ground. She's in beautiful trim, giving maximum pressure."

A wireless messenger entered with a signal pad, which he handed to the General.

"Lahore report three enemy 'planes passed over five minutes ago heading south. Frontier also report heavy storms working up, and snow likely in the hills."

"Thank you," said Billy, initialling the pad. "Tell Mr Trevor I'm running her out now." He turned to the flight-sergeant—

"Have her run out, Jenkins, and I'll take her up. See that all the guns are ready and the spare belts in position. And bring along my coat and gloves. It'll be cold high up."

He climbed up the ramp out of the dug-out, and walked over to where his car stood, reflecting as he went on the perversity of life in general. If this war had only come six months later all would have been well,—trials over, his machine adopted in general use, with plenty of trained pilots, instead of there being only one machine built, though others had been hastily begun. Worse still, there were no pilots, for besides Pat, Jenkins, and himself, only two others knew the secret, which naturally had had to be kept very close in the experimental stages. One was Welsh, the head of the aircraft factory at Bombay, and the other was a selected squadron commander whom Manning had sent home to report to the Air Board and arrange for material for India, the wing metal being unprocurable locally. Manning himself was to have followed in a couple of months.

But before the trials were properly finished war had broken out, and now the railways were busy rushing every available man and horse and gun to the frontier.

He and Pat—mostly Pat, he always said—had found the secret at last, stumbled on it, as they always said they would, and hit on the absurdly impossible fact that the back pressure generated by the wing of a soaring bird under certain conditions of light causes the forward reaction of the whole wings, and consequently produces the necessary lift.

Then followed the years of patient research before they and Welsh of the Aircraft Factory evolved a combination of metals and chemicals which would produce the same result. Just two years ago they had found it, and made the first model. He could see Pat now, as with bated breath she launched it on the aerodrome. It dropped, and failure seemed certain, when it fluttered, steadied into horizontal flight, and then banking to the set of the rudder Pat had given it, circled round and round, trailing a long line of hairlike

silk which they had attached for recapture if necessary.

But the little model wouldn't fly at night, and they had to seek some means of producing an artificial light action so as to be independent of atmospheric conditions. It was Pat who proved that electricity applied properly to the artificial nervures of the wings gave the same result as light; but it was Welsh who had devised a storage plant light enough to be of practical value.

Now the first machine was ready and had been flown, Manning himself bringing her up from Bombay with a dummy propeller run by electricity fitted on for the occasion. She had done all they asked of her and more, showing undreamed-of possibilities, and to-day Billy was taking her up to see if she could drive down the enemy 'planes as they had driven down the antiquated machines opposed to them.

He had settled it the night before. It was not his place to go out scrapping on his lonesome, but the "Grey Hawk" was the only machine that stood a chance, and he was the only man who could fly her. He could send up other machines as well, the few he had left, but they would only get downed to no purpose, and their slow speed would tie him down. Better save them for night-work, where in the darkness they might be less at a disadvantage, and superior skill and grit make up for mechanical failing. Also there was a distinct shortage of pilots, and Billy's face grew grim as he thought of the men he had lost, shot down without a chance. He had the gift of making friends of the men who served under him, and every loss had been a personal one.

Last but not least, his best flight commander, young Saunders, lay a still, white, uncomplaining mass of bandages in the big hospital, and the "Babe," Billy's daughter, had only been engaged to him a fortnight. He would be lucky to live, still luckier if he ever walked again: the doctors had told the General privately the night before, when he had driven round with the "Babe," a little, white, tearless, pathetic slip of a girl, dark-eyed from three nights without sleep. Luckily he had been shot down close to home, and his observer, a sergeant of exceptional coolness, though wounded himself, had brought the machine, half the engine clean blown away from a direct hit with a small shell from one of the big blue 'planes, down in uncertain giddy spirals, and landed her, or rather crashed her gently, just as a smouldering longeron burst into flame near the leaking petrol tanks.

"The filthy swine," muttered Billy. It was so utterly unnecessary and unprovoked, such typical war of the kind we thought we'd finished with in 1919—the inevitable war bred by a materialistic people, with their foul teeming breeding-grounds, their shibboleth of the "earth to the strong"—*i.e.*, to the bestial unrestrained mob; its worship of mere num-

bers as the be-all and end-all of a nation, its glorification of the State at the expense of the individual family.

Pat Manning, sitting in the car, leant forward as he came up. She was pale, and her hands were very tightly clasped, but she spoke bravely.

"Any news, dear?"

"Yes. Three of the blue beasts have passed Lahore, coming this way."

He got into the car and lit a cigarette. Pat's hand found his under the rug. The chauffeur was talking to a mechanic some distance away.

"You'll take her up now, I suppose." The tone was a statement, not a question. Much as she loathed letting him go, Pat was not the one to stand in the way of what she conceived to be her man's duty; and this job was particularly his or "theirs," as she preferred to call it. Had it been a two-seater, she would most certainly have gone too, if she could have prevailed on Billy to take her.

"Yes. They're just running her out. It'll be her first real work, and she carries enough, Heaven knows. If we can't stop them in a few days, the whole of our concentration will go west."

Pat tightened her hand on his.

"You've got the best of all possible machines—haven't you, dearest? and you'll have me with you, for we've put the best of us into her, you and I together. But . . . you won't take any unnecessary risks—promise."

She broke off a minute, and then pointed towards the "Hawk's" hangar. "There she is now. Doesn't she look ripping?"

The grey biplane had been brought up the ramp, and the riggers were bolting the 'planes into flying position. The first rays of the sun gilded the edges of the 'planes where the metal blades turned over in a sweeping curve, and lit up the stream-lined silvered boss in front, which terminated in a beautifully modelled little hawk's head, the "Babe's" design.

"Come along then, dear, and give her your blessing before we start." He got out of the car, and turning, held out both hands to help Pat out. She stepped down, a slim, straight, girlish figure still, despite the grey streaks in the heavy hair.

They walked silently over to where the flight-sergeant had guided the machine into the best bit of level ground he could find, and the pioneer working-party had cleared a narrow track running into the wind. The subaltern was talking to the sergeant, and both saluted as the Mannings came up.

"Good morning, Mr Trevor. Good morning, Jenkins," said Pat. "It's lucky she can take off so quickly, as they've made such a mess of the landing-ground. How is she to-day, Jenkins?"

"Beautiful, Mrs Manning. You can feel her like a live thing under your hand."

"Well, come along and let me see for myself."

She and Sergeant Jenkins walked round to the other side, and Pat climbed up into the cockpit, where she busied herself testing controls and generally overhauling things, in close confab with Jenkins perched on the wing, while Billy and Trevor stood talking a little way off. Pat was a person who always inspired devotion, but she had no more devout worshipper than Jenkins, who considered her something almost more than human ever since she had pulled his wife through a bout of diphtheria.

A rigger came up with Billy's coat and helped him on.

"Your cap and goggles, sir," he said as he handed them to the General.

"Thank you," said Billy, as he slipped on the cap and gave his forage-cap to the man. "Put my gloves in the rack, will you, please. It's coldish these days up high."

He turned to Trevor. "I think it's time I started, Bob. I want time to look around and test her a bit. Keep on the telephone all the time."

He stepped up to the machine. Pat got out on to the wing, and he climbed into the cockpit and examined the guns and belts, and settled himself comfortably. Then he began trying the controls.

"They're all in order, dear. I've tried them."

"So I guessed." He pointed with a smile to the control lever. Knotted round below the gun-buttons was a cotillion favour, a little grey bird with gaudy tinsel streamers.

"Not mine," she said. "It was the 'Babe' who made me promise to put it there. It was Jimmy's favour at the New Year ball."

"Oh!" There was a world of understanding in Manning's voice as he fingered the tinsel streamers.

"I've put things in the racks, dear,—chocolate and biscuits, and a flask. They're on the right, and in the left"—there was a slight catch in the voice—"you'll find dressings and iodine."

"Shan't want them, dearest. The blue birds will though, probably, if they get time to use them," replied Billy resolutely.

Jenkins and Trevor were discreetly looking the other way. "Good-bye, dear," said Pat, as she leant over and kissed him once. "Shoot straight."

She stepped down from her perch on the wing. Jenkins came to the front of the machine, and the men took up their places at the wing-tips.

"Holding?" called the General.

"Holding, sir!" replied the sergeant, raising his arm.

"Contact!" called Billy, and then pushed forward a small lever on his left, that slid over a brass-faced dial.

The "Grey Hawk" began to vibrate gently with a faint whirring noise. The wings rocked slightly, and little trails and whirls of dust began to dance away behind, and the men at the wing-tips felt them strain against their hands.

The needle slid across the face of the power meter as

Billy pressed over the lever and then pulled it back.

"Stand clear!" he shouted, and the chocks were pulled away from the wheels. He waved back the wing-tip men; Jenkins, with a last look round, saluted and stood clear; and with a wave of his hand to Trevor and Pat, Billy pushed over the pressure lever. The machine quivered an instant, and then slipped forward, noiselessly gathering way as the air-speed dial-hand slid round, "20, 25, 30." The joy-stick came back at the very edge, it seemed, of a bomb crater, and she lifted into the air like a soaring kite lifts over a wall.

True flight this, felt Manning. No whirring propeller, no clattering roaring engine spitting oil, just the poetry of motion in perfect silence, save for the faint whirring noise the wings made, and only the whip of the wind in your face to show that you were moving. He pulled her up more, climbing straight towards the city with its domes and minarets gleaming in the morning sun. The altimeter rose steadily, 3000, 4000, 5000—something like 2000 feet a minute. He crossed the walls at 7000 and pulled the stick back to see how steeply she would climb before stalling.

He knew it would be a pretty big angle, farther back than in any 'plane he had ever seen, but this time practice was in advance even of theory. It was nearly 24 degrees upward inclination before he felt the control slacken and the stick waver idly in his hand as she slid back on her tail. He pulled back the pressure lever and let her go. She hung in the air, hesitated on a wing-tip, and then her nose dipped and she shot downwards, the stick steadying in his hand as she flattened out automatically to a gliding angle that must have been about one in fifteen.

He forced her down once more, pushing over the pressure lever as he dived. Then he pulled her over in a series of perfect loops, finally sending her down in a spinning nose-dive to well under the thousand mark, when he flattened out and started a steady climb in great sweeping spirals, for all the world like the vultures he passed at intervals.

Pat was right. He certainly had the best of all possible machines, the nearest thing to a bird that man had yet flown. Nothing else ought to be able to stand up to him, not even the big multiple-engined triplanes.

The buzz of the wireless telephone-receiver, attached to his cap, drew his attention, and he slipped up the mouthpiece from the breast-pocket of his coat.

"Hulloa—is that you, Trevor?" A feminine voice came back—

"No—me—Pat. How's she going?"

"Beautifully; but what are you doing there? No outsiders allowed near the wireless . . ."

"I'm *not* an outsider—I'm the inventor, or co-inventor, if you prefer. I just told Mr

Trevor I was coming in, '*bus*,' so there. The 'Babe's' rung me up here to tell me they're operating on Jimmy now. It'll be touch and go, I'm afraid."

"Poor little Kiddy. Tell her to keep smiling and he'll pull through all right. I'm off north now. Tell Trevor to keep on the line all the time. Good-bye, dear."

The "Grey Hawk" was climbing steadily, and a glance at the power-indicator showed that she was running on generated power direct without touching the storage-plant. The atmospheric conditions were perfect—clear bright sky and hot, although cooler every minute now as they drew nearer the 10,000-feet mark. Manning wanted to get well up, over 15,000, before the enemy arrived. They would probably be flying pretty low, contemptuously low they had been of late; but he liked to be on the safe side.

The growing cold made him pull his gloves on, for he was cursed with a bad circulation. While doing so he sat up and looked round the empty sky, and then behind him to where Delhi lay, a formless ant-heap of houses fast fading into a blur, as he set her head towards Panipat, where in the past Delhi's fate had been settled more than once. To-day might settle it yet once more, for if the "Hawk" failed, that would be the end, since another uninterrupted week would enable them to wreck the concentration beyond hope of redemption. Even now it was pretty well delayed.

He thought of the tumbled heap of wrecked girders and broken piers that marked what had been the Delhi Jumna Bridge, its destruction doubling the strain of traffic on the western lines.

He looked at his watch. They should be along shortly now: the wind was in their favour. He pressed the buttons of the guns one after another, and they stammered away cheerfully.

Once more he strained his eyes to the north. Surely something this time, just a speck on the horizon below him. He steadied the machine and pulled out his glasses. Yes, there they were, or rather two of them, for the third was nowhere to be seen. He craned out to try and locate her, but without success. Perhaps she had gone off on a special stunt.

As they drew nearer, he studied them intently. They showed up clearly in the field of his large-aperture prism-glasses, while with the sun behind him and at just the right angle, he was in all probability invisible to them.

Big triplanes, pale blue all over, save where on the upper 'planes a curious red conventional sign showed the nationality. Quite three times his size, and probably very heavily armed with guns fore and aft. He could hear now, faint and far off, the hum of the big multiple turbine-engines, growing in intensity as they drew nearer.

He slid forward the armoured head-cover, although he would far rather have taken his

chance with it open and kept the better field of view. But he could afford no chances to-day. The blue 'planes drew closer, passing to westward and below him. He swung the "Hawk" round, and with full power on dived on to the rear 'plane.

Noiseless, and dropping out of the eye of the sun, it is probable that the enemy did not realise his presence until he was within range. Certain, it seemed but a bare second from the time he saw through his telescopic sight the rear gunner fling himself round and bring his gun into action, and then flop, an inert mass, over the mounting, till, as with all three guns going, Manning swept diagonally across the blue 'plane, raking her from end to end, and saw three shells burst one after another on the armoured fuselage just where he knew the fuel tanks to be.

As he cart-wheeled round right-handed to get behind her again, he caught a glimpse of smoke and saw her nose going down, while at the same instant the splash of bullets on his armour showed that the other 'plane was taking a hand in the game, and she shot back past him on a climbing turn.

But his pace was too fast, and as she swept round again to catch him he was two hundred feet above her, and climbing at nearly twice her speed.

The first 'plane was well alight now, thank goodness. She was diving unsteadily down, with great gouts of black smoke streaming behind; and as he watched, Billy saw her tilt over with one wing flaming, and then lurch sickeningly downward.

"One up," he muttered, and dived towards No. 2, who pulled up to meet him, letting drive with an automatic from above the top 'plane as she came. The angle was too steep to bring her heavier guns into action without stalling, and the pilot evidently feared to lose height against this new machine that could climb so fast.

Billy swooped straight for her, and as he swerved off at the last possible fraction of a second into a vertical bank, he saw the man in the forward cockpit hanging out helplessly over the side. He pulled up the "Hawk" at that marvellous climbing angle of hers, and she shot up like a partridge towering, and hung again above the enemy 'plane.

A third dive brought him several more bullets clattering on his armour, and one splintering on the edge of the vision-slit ripped open his cheek; but he had a perfect position as he dropped from straight behind, spraying the blue beast from tail to nose, and suddenly found her drop out of his sight as he looped over almost on top of her wings.

"Good-bye-ee, I think," he said, pulling out. The blue biplane was spiralling down, apparently hopelessly out of control. He wiped the blood from his face and followed. She didn't seem to have much kick left, and the near engine had stopped. Drawing closer,

he let her have it once more as close as he could get, and again saw the burst of shells on the fuselage as he slid past without drawing any answer. The pilot seemed to have vanished — probably slipped, dead or unconscious, from his seat. Billy watched her down-spinning in aimless erratic circles until she crashed just outside a village.

He circled slowly round for a minute or two, fingers on gun-buttons, but nothing moved in the wreckage. Then sliding back the armoured head-cover, he climbed again to see if the third enemy 'plane was anywhere in sight. The sky, however, seemed absolutely empty, so he turned Delhiward, calling up as he did so on the wireless telephone.

"That you, sir?" came the anxious voice of Trevor at Delhi. "What luck?"

"Found two, and pushed 'em down, but number three's missing. Ask Lahore if they've any further news. And tell my wife the machine is perfect, will you."

He circled high above the ridge until the telephone started again.

"Lahore report that one turned back after bombing Ferozepur. They think she's having engine trouble, and are hoping to hear of her coming down *en route*. Hill with the only 'plane at Ferozy has gone after her, and if her engines are really giving trouble, he might stand some chance."

"Hope he downs her. All three down would give the swine something to think about."

"Frontier report very heavy storms and snow in the hills, sir. Probably no more will come over to-day."

"Right-oh; then I'll come down."

Billy switched off and dropped her nose, and with her wonderful, bird-like, flat-gliding angle she spiralled down. He slipped off his gloves. The aerodrome drew nearer, and as he circled in and turned up wind for the run in, he caught sight of Pat standing near the wireless.

With hardly a tremor the "Grey Hawk" touched ground, and as she did so he altered the wing incidence and brought her up all standing in thirty yards. He mopped his face and did his best to clean his fur collar for Pat's sake. Face wounds seem to bleed such a lot.

She found him thus engaged, and apologising for not having used the dressings. "Forgot all about them, dear; I was so busy thinking about the 'Hawk' and all she could do, and it's only a deepish scratch really. How's Jimmy?" he said, as she fussed over him with lint and iodine.

"They've finished now, and Colonel Williams is far more hopeful. I rang him up and asked. They say he has really a good chance now of getting over it."

"Thank God! We'll both go round this evening." He lit a cigarette as Pat finished with the bandage. "You've made me feel as if I really

was wounded," he said ruefully as the iodine livened up.

Trever came up full of congratulations and hungry for details. He showed the General a code wire from Welsh at Bombay announcing the despatch of two completed Hawks, accompanied by some of the mechanics he had been specially training. Also, best of all, the wire stated that the two pilots he sent with them had flown the machines after four hours' instruction; and though, of course, further practice would be required, they ought to be perfectly at home in them in a couple of days.

"That means arrival tonight," said Billy. "Good old Welsh. Tell Parker to have everything ready, and the workshops should have them in flying trim by the morning, if we're left in peace. Thank Heaven for the storms up north. I'm off for a bite of breakfast now, and, I suppose, a visit to the hospital *en route*. I'll give you a lesson in handling the 'Hawk' afterwards."

He climbed out of the machine, and leaving Jenkins to run her in, walked over to the car with Pat.

"So the dream has come true after all, dear, hasn't it? Do you know, I was dreaming all the way back of what the future might hold now that we've found it, and what utter horrors it would have meant for the world if the others had found it first."

She slipped her arm in his and looked at him tenderly.

"Trust you for dreaming, darling—always—always."

GANPAT.

A SECRET SURVEY.

BY REAR-ADMIRAL BOYLE SOMERVILLE, C.M.G.

II.

BUSHIRE is a town situated at about eighty miles southward from the head of the Gulf, whose original *raison d'être* was, no doubt, its harbour. This reason still exists, but not for modern vessels, as it is far too shallow for anything except dhows. Regarded with the tourist's eye, it has all the appearance of a large and excellent bay of tranquil water; but when the navigator produces a chart, it is seen from the soundings that a steamer of ordinary draught would have to anchor between three and four miles from the town, and quite outside the protecting shores of the bay itself. The place was a fishing village for 1200 happy unregarded years, until 1750, when it was chosen by the Shah to be the Portsmouth of Persia. This pre-eminence persists; and when we arrived there in the *Sphinx* we found the entire Persian Navy anchored in its principal home port. This was H.I.P.M.S. *Persepolis*, a gunboat of the most extreme antiquity. We gazed on her with the respect due to age and infirmity, and then exchanged with her commanding officer the proper pompous naval visits, in the best modern style, "the usual compliments" being paid on either side, in superfine Dartmouth French and its Teheran equivalent.

The land around the harbour is, for twenty miles, a low flat plain. At its confines, the great rampart of mountains suddenly springs up, on whose top is the real Persia, 3000 feet and more above the sea, stretching all the way to the Caspian. The hot little town of Bushire, tightly squeezed within its white wall at the tip of a point of land which projects into the bay, is surrounded on three sides by the water. All the foreign consulates, and even the house of the Persian Governor, are left panting outside the wall, on the scorching plain. In 1856 we had a little war with Persia, during which Bushire surrendered to our forces, and remained in our occupation for some months. Since then, we have retained not only a consulate at the town, but also a Political Resident, whose Residency is at Rishire, six miles away.

The drive there, to report our proceedings to date, was an interesting experience. It was undertaken in a vehicle whose only living counterpart, probably, is to be found in Napoleon's carriage at Madame Tussaud's Exhibition. The ropes with which, like St Paul's ship, it was bound together, front to rear, fortunately held during the drive. As we hopped over the Alpine corrugations of the hard-baked

track, Kemp and I had grave fears of being left behind on it, in the stuffy after-part of the chariot, when, as seemed inevitable, the narrow curving isthmus which connected us with the front wheels, coachman's box, and horses, should at length yield to *force majeure*. We drove thus, in deep trepidation, past the British Consulate, the Turkish, and the Russian; then past the French and Dutch Consulates, amicably conjoined; past the Imamzada Mosque, conspicuous on its little hill, and came at last, with the two parts of our coach still wonderfully undivorced, to the British Residency. The country on each side of the road was already, by the end of May, a brown desert. The crops, green six weeks earlier, were all harvested, and nothing was now alive but a few late trees, blossoming in feverish haste before the rapidly advancing summer should overtake and shrivel them; casting the flowers and leaves of to-day, to-morrow into its oven.

The Residency is an immense building, all pillars and roof, like a vast hay-barn. The rooms in it are merely spaces screened off amidst the pillars and made mosquito-proof. Its coolness and amplitude were absolute heaven, by contrast with the cramped, sweat-box cabins of a ship,—even of a ship expressly designed for hot weather, such as the *Sphinx*.

It takes a sailor really to appreciate the "blessings of the land," for the enjoyment of which he prays daily; and seldom have I been so truly grateful for anything as for the night spent under that great roof—as wide as it was hospitable.

A couple of days later we left, to resume my running survey of the Persian coast. For thirty miles to the southward of Bushire is a wide and featureless plain, whose every indentation and khor was well known, and quite unnecessary to re-survey. From that point onward, the flat land bordering the sea is but a narrow strip—a mere footstep between the water and the great ranges of barren 5000-feet mountains, which stand behind it as a wall for 300 miles to the southward. Somewhere along this cramped seaboard there might—but very improbably—exist some unknown crack, or even some bay; and as the water was deep, the coast could be approached sufficiently closely to investigate it comfortably and with certainty.

To the British eye, accustomed to a cool grey heaven and a green and fruitful earth, the view of the naked ribs of the brown mountains, roasting under the furious furnace of the Persian sky, raised an unceasing pity for those condemned to live in this Earthly Hell. There seemed to be quite a large number of such unfortunates. Everywhere along the dismal coastline, village succeeded village, tiny, ancient, fringed with date-palms, and surmounted, usually, by towers of strength against the enemy, whether sea-pirate or robber of the

mountains. Desert lay between each place of settled abode; desert mountains, of drear and monstrous outline, lay behind them; the green desert of the sea mourned in front of them, whitening as it broke over nameless rock and shoal. The most ambitious Power could not but pause before committing its fortunes and its children to the arms of this Moloch land, to wither miserably in the brazen heat of its arid wastes.

Our first stopping-place, ninety miles southward from Bushire, was named Ras-al-Mutaf. There is here a flat point of land, with its end curving round in a long sandy shoal, between which and the shore there is a space of moderately protected water. Here we anchored, with the double intention of making such survey as should show whether this uninviting anchorage, with its neighbouring village, could ever be sophisticated into a naval and commercial port; and also to clear up several doubts that existed as to its geographical position, as to the correctness of the charted soundings, and as to other reported details concerning it. Our intentions were frustrated. The long-pending Shamál came down on us, in a burst, out of the blazing north-west. A hurricane of flame, almost, is this terrible wind. As it strikes you, you seem to be passing the door of an open furnace: you gasp with heat and astonishment. It sweeps along the shore in a deep-brown cloud of flying dust and grit. The date-palms, the only living things that rejoice before it, bend, tossing their tough green fronds and load of ripening fruit. The sky and the land disappear in a hot murk; mankind, too, disappears into dug-outs in the ground, shaded by boughs, while it passes over. There is nothing hid from the heat thereof. Between the gusts you may still see the slow camels, sloping southward along the coast road, burdened, strung out, sterns to the wind, disdainful even of the Shamál, without haste, without rest. Surveying work becomes impossible. There is no sun or star visible by which to find latitude and longitude. No feature remains, whether of mountain summit or of coastal rock, that is not either blurred, or else quite invisible in the brown haze; and the fierce wind raises so big a sea, with white-crested waves, that boat-work and sounding are out of the question. For three detestable days and nights the Shamál blew fiercely, and still we watched and waited. At last, on the fourth day, it moderated sufficiently for us to decide that the place was useless as a harbour, both from its depths and from the fact that there was no protection from the wind.

June had opened upon us when we continued the "running survey" to the southward. It is not possible to describe the method by which such a survey is made, without becoming either unintelligible or else desperately boring.

The underlying principle is a simple one—the results produced are a mere pioneering sketch; but, for all that, in practice, it is certainly the most difficult method that exists for the charting of a coast; and it needs long experience to produce good results. When one has five or six assistants, all experts, as in a regularly commissioned surveying vessel, it is, even then, work requiring the closest care and application, and is a most exhausting performance for everybody concerned. A single day of it reduces body, brains, and eyes to the merest pulp. At a distance of seventeen years, it still requires no reminder from my journal of that running survey of the Persian coast to bring back to me the aching memory of the task. Instead of six skilled assistants, I had but two—the captain of the *Sphinx* and the navigating officer—neither of whom, naturally, had ever undertaken anything of the sort before. Fortunately, both of them turned out to be most helpful, not to say devoted. Without them, in fact, the work would have been impossible, and I should have collapsed, blinded by that blinding light, cooked in that terrific heat, while, day after day, as we steamed past it, the austere khaki coast unfolded itself ahead endlessly, and disappeared astern. Behind us stormed the Shamál, now settled down into its usual "seventy days" of summer life, when it blows continuously, often blotting out, in a sudden whirl of dust, the "prominent object" on the coast-line, on a bearing of which I was depending to fix that part of the shore, and rendering my work of no avail. It was a most exasperating survey, but it had to be done. There was no other method by which doubt might be set at rest regarding the possible existence of an uncharted bay or harbour along the coast. For oneself, seeing might be believing; but, in order to persuade a doubting Admiralty who had not seen, it was necessary to produce on paper, not merely a written report stating that there was no such harbour, but also an actual plotted survey of the coast, together with the angles and observations on which it was based, to show that the truth was in you! Little—already known—harbours and tiny notches we passed, and in some we anchored and took soundings, while Kemp went ashore to pay a polite visit to the local Sheikh, as "eye-wash" against our real activities. It was one of his duties to pay such visits from time to time; and the Sheikhs, no doubt, thought this was merely one of these occasions. All of these places proved to be entirely unsuitable, either for naval purposes or for commerce. Many of them were exposed to the blistering Shamál, which, though worst in the summer, blows at intervals through nine months of the year, while others were open to the S.E. gales of the winter, or to both winds. Apart from disabilities of this nature, there was everywhere

the lack of fresh water; and, topping everything else, there was the climate! An efficient naval base could never be maintained by any northern nation in this Gehenna.

At length we reached Kishm Island, and, with it, the end of the survey came in sight. Kishm occupies a strong strategic position, exactly facing the narrow entrance to the Persian Gulf. It is a mountainous island, sixty miles in length, separated from the Persian coast by a long narrow channel, named "Clarence Strait" (after good King William IV.) There are three towns on it—Kishm, on the eastern extreme, which gives the island its name; Laft, on the northern side; and Basidu, on the western end. It was to the latter spot that we directed our weary steps; and, on our arrival, had the satisfaction of seeing the Union flag run up on the flagstaff of the village—for Basidu is British! It has been so since 1809, after what cannot have been other than a hot engagement. Laft was "reduced" at the same time, but it was left at that; while Basidu became the sanatorium of the Gulf for our ships' companies, and there was also maintained there a garrison of Indian troops. The hospital and barracks, long disused, are ruins; and there is now only a small village of ninety men, who, with an old Arab, our faithful Agent, represent the colony, and are established on an area, scarcely as much as one mile square, of bare and brown, but British soil.

When Kemp visited the Agent he heard from him that, not long before, the Russian Consul for the Gulf had arrived in his small sailing dhow, on a tour of the coast. On his arrival there was immediately hoisted on the flagstaff the Union flag of Britain. The Consul, a little man but a fierce, landed; and pointing to the flag, shook his fist at it, cursed it, and demanded to know why it had been hoisted, and for how many years it had been flying there. The Agent, himself an old man with a grey beard, replied that it had been flying ever since he could remember anything, but that there was a still older inhabitant who might know more. On being sent for, this ancient replied in like manner, that he could not remember any condition of affairs in Basidu other than the British supremacy and flag. The little visitor, it appears, then danced with rage (it was in January, and the temperature permitted, without great discomfort, this exhibition of the Russian ballet), and he called both of the old Arabs "liars." "Very well, then," says our Agent with high composure, "if you know better than we do, why do you ask us?" And with this firm reply a grave international crisis closed. The Consul went back to his boat, simmering but thoughtful, and resumed his inspection of the coast.

Having thus "made our number" at Basidu, we left, and first steamed along the south side of Kishm Island, visiting, as we did so, the small

outlying islet of Henjam at its south-eastern end. Then, after passing the crumbling ruins of the old Portuguese fort at Kishm town, on the east of the island, we rounded into Clarence Strait and anchored off Laft. In 1622 we sent five ships—or the Honourable East India Company sent them—to assist the Persian forces in besieging the Portuguese at Kishm. The Persians, it seems, wanted their island back, and we wanted the Portuguese trade. Hence the alliance. Both of us got what we wanted, though in doing so we suffered an unexpected loss. William Baffin, the famous Elizabethan Arctic navigator of Baffin's Bay, was killed at the beginning of the siege of Kishm by a shot from the Portuguese castle. He certainly went in for extremes of climate during his wanderings, and would have been better advised to have stuck to the icefields and the snow!

Laft, the delightful seaside resort off which we now found ourselves, is a harbour completely enclosed, easily accessible, fairly deep for anchorage, strategically well-positioned, and defensible without difficulty — yet, with all these virtues, it is, like Naaman the Syrian, "a leper." Not only is the fresh-water supply of the most exiguous character, but the position has the reputation — a true one, for we tested it—of being the hottest place in the whole Persian Gulf, and that is to say, in the whole world. Not a breath of outside air, not even the Shamál, gets into it. We sat and dripped helplessly all day, completing a vicious circulation of moisture by pouring down inside us bottle after bottle of partly-cooled aerated waters, which panting Goanese stewards made haste to supply. One could do nothing else but drink, and without liquid one would have become as a desiccated fruit, dried-up, mummified. I have thus consumed, in a single day at Laft, as many as twelve large bottles of the most uninspiring "pop"; and this was well below the average official thirstiness of the *Sphinx*. When night-time came I reposed on a grass-mat laid on my chart-table on deck, clad in the absolute minimum of clothing—in bathing-drawers, to be exact—for pyjamas about one were as abhorrent as a mattress beneath, while the temperature slowly rose, after nine o'clock, until it was well up in the hundreds by 2 A.M. The heat then steadied, and between 3 and 4 A.M. there was a blessed, blessed time when it really fell a few degrees. Then came untortured rest. But with the first crack of dawn, buzzing flies attended the death-bed of sleep, and galvanised their limp victim into sufficient activity to arise, don such raiment as might satisfy the conventions, and start off in a boat, armed with sextant and theodolite, for surveying work "in the field." The temperature then might be as low as 97°; but by 8 A.M. it would be well up in the hundreds once more, and, in order to avoid a heat-stroke, it was necessary to return on board the ship, to the shelter of

treble awnings. Nothing could be done outside that protection until about six o'clock in the evening, when an hour might be snatched before darkness closed the scene. Laft could not therefore be considered as a possibility for a "naval base," in spite of its other decided advantages.

It was late in June when we steamed back through Clarence Strait, and anchored at its eastern entrance off the town of Bandar Abbás, which stands on the mainland here, and is faced by that famous island, Hormuz. Basra at the head of the Gulf, and Hormuz at its mouth, are names to take you back, as on a Magic Carpet, accompanied by Sindbad the Sailor, to a sandal-scented and romantic past. Until the seventeenth century Hormuz was the Mart of the East, where all the riches of India met in exchange with the pearls of Bahrein, with the attars, the pungent gums, and spicery of Araby the Blest; with dyed garments from Basra, with silks and carved work, damascened weapons, and delicate filigree of silver and gold from Baghdad the Fortunate. Ichabod! The glory has departed, indeed! Not a vestige now remains of it all, save dry ruins, houses crumbled so small that the few poor fishermen who still cling to the place cannot utilise them as dwellings, but make for themselves rude wigwams of date-palm leaves. On a low point above the village is the battered but still threatening remnant of a fort built by Albuquerque, when, in September 1507, the Portuguese seized the place and its riches, and reduced its inhabitants to subjection, with no circumstance omitted of audacity and cruelty. There the Portuguese remained, in complete lordship, until 1622, when, after a siege of three months, Hormuz fell, with Kishm, before John Company's ships, aided by a Persian force. Beside the ruined fort there are many ancient tanks, now empty and dry, cut into the rocky heart of the island. In the days of its splendid youth, water for these reservoirs was brought off in skins by boat from the river Minab, ten miles away. There is no other moisture obtainable, save for a saline trickle from the hills after rain. The general appearance of the little island is very remarkable. It consists of a rounded lump of hills, with three or four central conical peaks, seven hundred feet high. The lower parts, all completely barren, are striped, and patched, and barred with a geological "dazzle-painting" in ochre and red, brown, purple, and buff, while the surmounting cones, in strong contrast, are pure white. The whole effect is that of some monstrous pudding, standing on the blue-and-white plate of the sea, over whose apex has been poured (in pre-war days!) a large jug of thick cream.

A telegram was waiting us at Bandar Abbás, which ordered us to Maskat, to await the next mail steamer, which was bringing written orders for further survey

work required, before I should leave for England. We sailed at once, rounding Cape Masandam, the Arabian gate-post of the Gulf, where it is only twenty-five miles across to the Persian shore. The extremity of the point is a tattered peninsula of hills whose heart is penetrated by deep volcanic fiords, the whole being joined by a narrow neck to the mainland to the southward. On its barren slopes there clings a settlement, said to be formed of the last remnants of the aboriginal inhabitants of Arabia, children of Shem, undiluted by the restless Bedouin blood of Ishmael, the race now dominating the remainder of that highly undesirable land.

It was refreshingly cool at Maskat, outside the Gulf limits, for the Monsoon had "broken." The gracious moisture and coolness which the Monsoon brings across the sea to India does not actually reach these deserts; but it affects the whole Indian ocean generally, so that every coast-line bathed by its waters rejoices therein. The five days that followed at Maskat, while we waited for the mail, were pleasant enough. There was a good deal of back survey-work to be plotted and reports to be written, and the busy days on board the ship were usually ended by cheerful sun-downings at the Residency, with tennis and tea. The Residency was a house, however, to be approached with some circumspection, in spite of the hospitality of its inhabitants. It is built around the four sides of a central court-yard. You come into it through an archway at the back, and find a broad flight of stairs on the right hand, leading to the cool verandah and living-rooms on the first floor, which thus are well raised above the heat of the ground, and look widely forth on the harbour. Mrs Resident was a lady whose kindness of heart extended itself far past the plane of humanity, and reached down, even, to our distant and nasty little relatives, the Apes. She kept, in the courtyard of the Residency, a collection of the more highly-coloured of these creatures. No Thames barge, brilliant in red, blue, and yellow, can display more startlingly effective bows, or a more originally conceived stern decoration than could these Simian guardians of the stairs; and no bargee ever had such a command of the language of execration as they. They gnashed their teeth, yearningly, at the unfortunate visitor; they leapt and danced at the full extent of their straining waist-chains, clucking and gibbering at him, or hideously shrieking battle, murder, and sudden death; they seized the hand-rail—mercifully a stout one, and they could only just reach it—and shook it in impotent fury. In brief, they put the wind up you. By closely hugging the wall on the starboard hand, and not hauling to the wind again, until well past these dangers, it was, however, just possible to circumnavigate them; and the delightful wel-

come that greeted the visitor on the top landing made quite well worth the Passage Perilous below. One day there was to be a picnic, which (it was so arranged) was to take place on the top of the steep rocky crags that rose immediately behind the Residency, to a height of about three hundred feet. There was no path, it was real mountaineering, and involved stepping upwards, nearly perpendicularly, from one dangerous and precarious foothold to the next. It was supposed to be cooler up there than on the shady verandah, and in any case it was a change. Such picnics had often taken place before, and special wooden trays, upon which to carry up the tea things, formed part of the Residential equipment. No diminution was permitted in the glory of the repast. It was set forth on the topmost crag as exquisitely as on the verandah; the silver, the linen, the delicate china—all had to be carried up by the "house-boys." No difference whatever was allowed, and they must have been jugglers of no mean attainments to have scaled these precipices, as they constantly did, carrying the heavy trays, without either smashing or spilling anything. When we, from the *Sphinx*, arrived that afternoon and had successfully evaded the raging monkeys, we were in time to witness an impressive scene and to learn a lesson in household management.

It appeared that Selim, head house-boy, had struck! He had refused point-blank again to carry the tea things up that atrocious precipice. In my cowardly and sympathising heart I could not blame him. Not so Mrs Resident. With high originality of method, and entire knowledge of human — and especially of Arab—nature, she summoned to the verandah her whole household,—there seemed to be about twenty of them. Selim was then ceremoniously conducted to the largest and grandest chair, while the remainder of the "boys" were directed to pass before him, there enthroned, and to salaam, deep and lowly, proffering respectful salutations to one who had grown so great as even to equal the Mem Sahib in the giving of orders — the very Mem herself, upon whom the eyes of all, hitherto, had waited! It was great fun; and no strike was ever more effectively or good-humouredly broken. By the time the fourth reverential mocker had passed, Selim had had enough of it. He leapt from the chair, seized his tray of silver, and presently, with several others, his chamois-assistants, was scaling the difficult peaks, where presently we followed them, deeply impressed.

The mail steamer came at last, and the orders she brought were for us to visit, and report on, Chahbar, a good-sized bay, 150 miles away on the Makran coast, opposite Maskat—whether Persian or Beluchi, it would be difficult to say. It was of strategic importance, and that was enough for us. We sailed immediately for that delectable spot, and spent

there five days in obtaining replies to the strenuous string of questions to which it was my task to find the answers. The old *Sphinx* rolled ceaselessly and abominably day and night on the Monsoon swell which swept in and round the bay; but apart from that, and apart from its almost entire barrenness and lack of water, the place certainly had possibilities. In the pursuit of angles and heights, I climbed the hills that lie beyond the plain on which the little town stands; and I have often wondered since if any True Believer came across and cursed my heel-marks in the sand. India-rubber heels were comparatively new in those days, and mine were screwed on with a metal arrangement which left a clearly marked impression of a Geneva cross behind it, easily to be construed by an imaginative native into a sign of the times! We left Chahbar, our work completed, profoundly sympathising with the staff of the Indian Telegraph Station there marooned in the desert, in tantalising touch with the news and the affairs of the great world, and, like lighthouse-keepers on some isolated rock, in sight of its passing ships, but condemned to stand outside it, a lonely link in the chain of Eastern Empire.

Three days later I was packed up, and steaming away into the night, by the 10.30 P.M. train from Karachi to Bombay. The line goes across a great stretch of desert, and plunged us at once into heat and drought nearly up to Persian Gulf standards. As I lay in my carriage gasping for air, parched with thirst, the train drew up at the platform of some unimaginable place of habitation in the wilderness, and there came in at my closely-shuttered window—for I had a whole carriage to myself—a voice which said: "*Would you like some iced grapes?*" I imagined at first, in some dismay, that this was only "light-headedness," and the premonition of a heat-stroke; but it turned out to be a real offer, which almost immediately materialised. If Mr Bell, of the Indian Police, and his sister have forgotten that kind act, and how they shared the contents of their ice-box (without which no sane Indian travels by train in the height of the summer) with an unknown griffin wayfarer, who had no such equipment, they may now know that it has ever been remembered by a ceaselessly grateful recipient!

I sailed from Bombay in the good ship *Arabia*, and got home at the end of July, cool once more, and happy, bringing my sheaves with me—sheaves, in this case, of reports and charts, which included, I may humbly believe, discoveries of a useful character. The Admiralty letter of thanks, which in due course they evoked, made a stimulating glow in that dark corner where each one keeps, or should keep, a critical estimation of his own deeds.

THE KING'S PRIZE MONEY.

BY GILBERT SINGLETON-GATES.

CALL it what you will, prize bounty, prize award, prize fund, it is all the same thing —the King's prize money— earned by his seamen and marines in time of war.

After hundreds of years it is still regarded as the rightful reward for the Admiral of the Fleet and the ship's boy. Surely none can begrudge this extra remuneration to the men who spent the fulness of their years on the grey seas, who went down to the deep waters in queer ramshackle ships, seeking the unseen, who endured and fought and gained great victories.

Thus shall it remain as an encouragement to zeal and gallantry and enterprise— though in actual reality, prize money has had its day and its glories have departed for ever.

No longer can an indomitable Admiral, impoverished by circumstances, despatch his frigates in war-time to pick up a few prizes to fill his purse. No longer can an Anson wait for a treasure-ship worth a million and a half. No longer do seamen "fry" silver watches over the galley fires in an effort to expend their suddenly acquired riches.

Possibilities of huge hauls of treasure at sea did not exist in the late war. The largest seizures of ships took place at the inception, and our command of the waters was such that few enemy merchant ships ever ventured into the highways of ocean.

As Mr Laird Clowes once pointed out, prize money was the strongest incentive to service in the Navy during the eighteenth century. The one side of the gamble was this chance of wealth. The other side appears in the statistics of the Seven Years' Campaign against Spain. Of 184,893 seamen and marines employed, only 1512 were killed; but 133,708 died of disease and were missing — deserters in many cases, owing to the wretched conditions of naval life. We have no such gamble to-day.

Early in 1914 the Admiralty abolished prize money, holding that "the private enrichment of individuals by acts arising out of warfare is not compatible with the highest conception of the military or naval profession." The proceeds of the sale of captured enemy ships were to be used instead for a system of bounties in which the whole of the Navy, in place of a limited number of fortunate crews, might share. Thus arose the Naval Prize Fund.

By the Order in Council in 1915, His Majesty declared his intention to grant bounty (by virtue of the Naval Prize Act of 1864) to the officers and crews of such of his ships of

war as were actually present at the destroying or taking of any armed ship of any of His Majesty's enemies. Such officers and crews were entitled to have distributed among them as prize bounty, "a sum calculated at the rate of £5 for each person on board the enemy ship at the beginning of the engagement." Such constituted Naval Bounties as distinguished from the Prize Fund.

There was also a further reward, prize salvage, arising from occurrences such as came before Sir Samuel Evans in March 1916.

The *Pontoporos*, although a Greek vessel, was carrying coal from British merchants at Calcutta to British merchants at Karachi when the *Emden* captured and commandeered her cargo. Then the British light cruiser H.M.S. *Yarmouth* appeared, and found the *Pontoporos* in company with the *Markomannia*, a supply-ship to the *Emden*. The *Markomannia* was sunk and the Greek vessel released, and the law action was a claim by Captain H. L. Cochrane and the crew of H.M.S. *Yarmouth* that they saved the latter from certain destruction, and were thus entitled to remuneration for prize salvage and recapture.

These proposed changes were cordially welcomed in the Navy. The new plan meant that all would share in the harvest reaped by a few. Under the old and now obsolete system, the vessels engaged in capturing enemy ships, besides having the stimulus of constant exertion and excitement, reaped a rich harvest, while the main fleet blockading the enemy's ports, denied the zest of action but faithful to duty for long months together in all weathers, received nothing. Yet the blockading fleet, like the Grand Fleet, was the shield behind which the capture of enemy's commerce was made possible.

But the Admiralty declared they were unable to make any distributions until after the close of hostilities, with the result that not one, but many officers and men advertised publicly their willingness to accept cash offers for their post-war prospects of prize money. Not indeed that such a withholding of prize money was an innovation. On the contrary, it seemed the general practice in the ancient days to withhold these rewards till long after the participants in the actions had died, and ofttimes their relations as well.

By appointing a Prize Claims Committee which decided whether compensation should be given to claimants whose claims are not recognised by the prize law, but would be good in equity or civil law, the Admiralty brought more of the legal element into the matter of prize law, and their expenses became added to the already large sums spent on commissions and claims and costs of sales. So the lawyers have taken their dues, until at present the Naval Prize Fund

amounts to £5,600,000, a single full share being earned by thirty months' qualifying service. The value of one such share is 50s. Upon this basis I observe a recent writer calculated that the first distribution would result in the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet receiving £2500, and the ordinary seaman or marine £7, 10s.

Despite the large amount that has been allowed to the lawyers, and incidental expenses, all of which accounts the Admiralty guard most zealously, there still remains this large sum, and there is the absolute certainty of its being received by those entitled to it. This was not so in the old days, even apart from the peculations of prize-money agents.

Nicolas observed that prize money seems to have been as ancient as the Navy itself. Originally a force developed for piratical purposes, "it is not surprising that the men of the Navy sought for loot as a reward of their prowess, and as a recompense for the scars of battle." In the reign of King John, all captures at sea were regarded as the property of His Majesty entirely, and whether any reward was paid to the captors depended on his bounty alone. It is related that in 1205 the King granted a moiety of their takings to a number of galley-men in the service of Thomas of Galway, and a few years afterwards the sum of £100 to mariners and galley-men on account of the sale of the goods of a ship which was captured by them off the coast of Wales.

The King's purse was the real deciding factor. If his fortunes were at low ebb, the mariners received nothing. If the King was in funds, there was a chance of his being generous. But usually he pocketed the whole amount.

The Crown in practice, however, in the following reign, admitted the right of the captor to a share of the takings, and in the famous Black Book of the Admiralty of Edward III. the division of prize money is expounded in the Norman-French language in which that book was written. One quarter was assured to the King's Majesty, and another quarter to the owners of the capturing ships, while the remainder went to the captors; but the Admiral and a chosen few of his officers would appear to have secured by far the greater part, for bitter dissatisfaction existed amongst the seamen and mariners, culminating in a proposal emanating from an inquisition of mariners held at Queensborough in 1375, that after the deduction of the King's share, and in the absence of the Admiral, the remainder should go—one-half to the owners, and one-half to the captors; but that the master of the ship should have twice as much as any mariner. But nothing occurred to secure further consideration for the mariners' claims till, in 1596, the instructions and articles for the Cadiz fleet by Robert, Earl of Essex, and Charles,

Lord Howard, Lord High Admiral of England, contained the following references to prizes:—

"XVIII. When you shall be appointed to give chase and that you shall surprise any enemy ships that shall have treasure or merchandise of value in her, you shall take great care that those commodities in her be preserved; in respect whereof, and for your loyal and faithful service to be done on this voyage, Her Majesty's favour, bounty, and pleasure is that a third part of that which shall be taken from the enemy, so it be not the King's treasure, jewels, or a carrack, shall be employed to the commodity and benefit of the whole company, over and above his ordinary wages, according to his desert."

Parliament in 1642 assigned to officers and men of the capturing ships one-third of the value of the prizes taken by them; but it was the practice to make unjustifiable deductions on various pretexts, and with the delays in payment that always characterised these awards, discontent in the Navy was general. The sums were often not paid for many years.

An Act of 1649 gave the seamen half the value of a man-of-war taken, the other half going to a fund for the relief of the sick and wounded, widows and orphans. Men-of-war were paid for at the value of £12 to £20 per gun. The proceeds from the sale of merchant prizes were one-third to officers and men, one-third to the widows' and orphans' fund, and one-third to the State. A further new scheme was instituted in 1653, by which ten shillings per ton of every prize was paid, besides £6, 13s. 4d. for each gun carried and to £10 per gun for every man-of-war destroyed.

Three millions sterling was the extent of the booty at the capture of Havana in 1762 by our combined naval and military forces. What happened to it is best told by the historian Howitt, who says:—

"The same dishonourable conduct in the distribution of prize money, which has too often disgraced our service, was most flagrant here and incited the loudest murmurs. The Admiral and General pocketed each £122,697; the sea captains £1600 each; and the field officers only £564; the land captains £184 each (not so much as a naval lieutenant, who had each £234), whilst the poor sailors had nearly £3, 14s. 9d. each, and the poor soldiers, who had borne the brunt of the heat, the labour, and the fighting, received the paltry sum of £4, 1s. 8d. each. What had been the nature of the service to these poor fellows may be known from the fact that eleven hundred of them were killed by the climate and the enemy, and of the remaining army, at least 10,000 men, not more than 2500 were capable of service. By this conquest the passage of the

Spanish plate fleets was left entirely at our mercy."

Rodney—always a poor man, and a far greater fighting sailor than Pocock—had not the honour of taking Havana, and with it the sum of £122,000, which fell to its actual captor as prize money. Rodney was, in fact, in command in the West Indies at the time, and had most brilliantly captured Martinique, St Lucia, and other islands. Yet by a disgraceful piece of official jobbery Rodney had been recalled, or rather left with the Leeward Islands command and a diminished force; while Pocock, with a huge fleet and large land forces, had the distinction of reducing Havana and pocketing a fortune in prize money.

Discontent over prize money slumbered for years after this enactment, till the famous Cochrane (later the Earl of Dundonald) began his vigorous campaign against the Admiralty Prize Courts and naval lawyers and agents generally, in an effort to secure for the actual captors some modicum, however small, of the value of their prizes.

Referring in his autobiography to these scandalous peculations of the Courts and the lawyers, he says:—

"We got all the fighting, whilst the Admiralty Court and its hungry parasites monopolised the greater portion of our hard-won prize money. In many cases they took the whole, and in one case brought me into debt, though the prize was worth several thousand pounds."

The mutineers at the Nore in 1797, when they presented their demands, referred to this matter of the unjust distribution of prize money; but nothing came of that petition, save that it was the commencement of a series of exposures by Cochrane of the existent evils.

One may well wonder how it came about that the captors of prizes received nothing, and as the gallant Admiral remarked, in some cases were put into debt for an act of valour on the high seas. When Cochrane was appointed to the *Pallas* in 1805, he received his sailing orders from the Admiralty; but the Admiral of the Port of Plymouth recalled those orders, copied them, and reissued them to Cochrane. This allowed the Admiral, Sir William Young, to claim his share of any prize money that the *Pallas* might make. The Admiral's jurisdiction extended no farther than Plymouth Sound. But by reissuing the sailing orders he extended his authority wherever the *Pallas* might sail.

That ship had a wonderful cruise. She captured three Spanish ships laden with gems and dollars and golden ingots, and of the proceeds of these captures Sir William Young claimed, and actually received, one-half of Cochrane's share. Returning to Plymouth after this cruise with some £200,000 in specie and Spanish merchandise, "his lordship [Cochrane], by way of gratifying the seamen of his ship, and to show how lucky she had been in Spanish prizes, ordered

to be hoisted on the fore, main, and mizzen-trucks of their respective masts three massive Spanish golden candlesticks, which, glittering in the sun, had a whimsical effect to hundreds of spectators assembled below Government House."

Assiduous investigations by Cochrane revealed amazing scandals and abuses with regard to this money, particularly at the Admiralty Prize Court at Malta, dealing with the prizes in the Mediterranean, at whose hands both he and his crew had suffered considerably. A pirate ship he had captured near Corsica was condemned as a *Droit* of Admiralty, it being currently reported at Malta that certain persons connected with the Admiralty Court had a share in her. No one on the *Pallas* obtained a farthing of that money, but, on the contrary, the ship's company was condemned by the Admiralty Court to pay 500 double sequins as costs.

So bad had it become that Cochrane tried, with little hope of success, to get back to England to expose these robberies of the Malta Court, "the officials of which were reaping colossal fortunes at the expense of naval officers and seamen, who were wasting their lives and blood for official game."

Finally he did manage to get home, and on the floor of the House of Commons exposed the appalling extortions of the Prize Courts. In the course of his speech he said that "the most insignificant vessels were condemned at an expense equal to that of the largest, so that the condemnation of a fishing lugger might be swelled up to the expense of condemning an Indiaman; the labour of capture ending in nothing but putting money in the proctor's pockets." He instanced the case of a Jewish agent who received two-thirds out of the produce of the vessel, the remaining third being for the Admiral, Captain, and seamen.

The Judge of the Admiralty Court was most angry at what he called the unfounded accusations of Cochrane, but the Treasurer of the Navy, Mr Rose, admitted in his reply that there were such cases, and instanced one in which an agent at Portsmouth, who had £62,000 to distribute, made up his charges to £9462, of which £1200 was for postage.

Captain William Stanhope Badcock, an officer of Lord St Vincent's day, recounts that he was so unfortunate as to lose every penny of the prize money to which he had become entitled during the French war, owing to bankruptcy in various parts of the world of four agents to whom he had entrusted his prize affairs.

"These honest people," he says, "have an easy way of getting rid of money committed to their charge. A ship brings captured vessels into harbour. On board comes Mr A., B., C., or D., with a smirking face and soft tongue, making low bows, hoping that he may have the honour — being an accredited agent under a bond of £20,000 —to transact the affairs of H.M. ship. Officers generally being strangers in the port, and having orders frequently to proceed to sea again in forty-eight

hours after completing water and provisions, have no time to look after or make inquiries about stability of prize agents, and therefore trust their concerns to the first that come. The prizes in the meanwhile are sold by the agent. Now, what does he do generally with the money? Why, speculates with it on his own account. If he fails, the prize agent breaks, and off he starts, paying perhaps not a 1s. in the £."

No redress of these evils was attempted. A few years later, Cochrane, finding himself in debt for prizes, went to the Admiralty Court at Malta to discover why, and succeeded in stealing and smuggling away to a friend in Corsica the table of fees that hung in the Court. Great consternation and alarm arose in Malta, and he was even arrested for being in possession of the documents. He escaped from confinement, and again brought the matter before Parliament, by unrolling the table of costs of the condemnation of one of his prizes in the House, and the bill when unrolled was as long as the floor of the chamber itself.

Cochrane made interesting discoveries. The chief officer at Malta was a Mr Jackson, who held the office of marshal by deputy in order that he might perform the duties of proctor. He dealt with each prize in each separate capacity, and "right profitably did Mr Proctor Jackson perform the duty of attending and consulting himself as Mr Marshal Jackson," as the following extract from the table of costs of one prize reveals.

	Crs.	rls.	sc.
Attending (*as proctor*) in the registry and bespeaking a monition	2	0	0
Paid (*himself as marshal*) for said monition under seal and extracting	9	0	0
Copy of said monition for service	2	0	0
Attending Mr Marshal (*himself*) and feeing and instructing him to execute same	2	0	0
Paid the marshal (*himself*) for service of said monition (*on himself*)	2	0	0
Certificate of service (*on himself*) . . .	1	0	0
Drawing and engrossing affidavit of service (*on himself*)	2	0	0
Oath thereto and attendance (*on himself*) . .	2	2	3

In addition to this, the marshal claimed as perquisite one-half per cent on the inspection of prizes, one per cent for their appraisement, and two and a half per cent on sale. So that on a prize of £100,000 the marshal's share alone was £4000, irrespective of any other fees instanced above.

Yet despite all these efforts the matter was shelved, and it was not until 1864 that the Naval Prize Act came into being, an Act which continued in force until the war began in 1914.

Let it not be supposed, however, that the seamen of the early days were always badly treated in this matter of prize money. At times huge rewards came their way.

Five hundred thousand pounds of treasure from the Spanish register ship *Hermoine* fell a prize to the

British frigate *Active* and the sloop *Favourite*.

The public rejoicing at the birth of a new prince (George the Fourth) was heartened by this evidence of the prowess of the Navy; and the captains of the ships received £65,053, 13s. 9d. and £64,872, 13s. 9d. respectively, and their officers £13,004, 14s. 1d. each. Thirty-six petty officers had £1804, 0s. 4d. to spend as they chose, and sixty-eight seamen found themselves with £485 in gold. These men were at a loss to know how to dispose of so much money. They bought up all the watches in Portsmouth and "fryed" them over the galley fire. Then they passed a resolution making gold-laced tabs *de rigueur*. Those who failed to abide by the resolution were liable to severe penalties.

One wretched sailor overburdened with money escaped these dread consequences only by his powers of persuasion. The last to arrive at the shop, he discovered that all the gold lace had been bought up and he had to content himself with silver lace. His shipmates were wroth indeed. Only did he avoid punishment by his insistent plea that he had forced the salesman to accept the full price of the gold-laced article.

H.M.S. *Phaeton*, Sir A. Douglas, fell in with a Spanish galleon off the Lizard, one April day, and her cargo was valued at £1,200,000, of which sum her captor received £935,000.

Admiral Anson was a fortunate fellow in encountering valuable ships. During his voyage around the world he seized the far-famed Manilla galleon, rejoicing in the high-sounding name of *Nuestra Senora del Caba Donga*, which used to sail once a year for Spain laden to the hatches with treasure. Anson's original squadron of six ships, which had sailed round the world, had been, through various vicissitudes, reduced to the *Centurion*, the flagship, with a crew of 201, of which 45 were effectives.

The Admiral deliberately set out to waylay the Spanish vessel, which was both heavily armed and manned. She carried 42 heavy guns and 28 smaller pieces (*pateraros*), with a perfectly healthy crew of 550.

Nothing daunted, Anson gave battle, and after a fight lasting ninety minutes the Spaniard hauled down her flag, having lost 58 killed and 83 wounded. The actual vessel herself was sold at Canton. The value of her treasure was a million and a half dollars, and this money was brought home and drawn in triumph through the city of London in thirty-two waggons, "preceded by a band of military musicians, and guarded by a detachment of the ship's company."

On board the French *Concepcion*, a prize of 1745, was a remarkable cargo of cocoa, sixty-eight chests of silver, gold and silver to the amount of over £200,000, a two-wheeled chaise, the wheels and axles of which were silver set with diamonds and other precious stones, and a quantity of gold in bars.

"When the ship was put up for sale, the French captain, upon the promise of a reward from Captain Frankland, the captor, discovered to him 30,000 pistoles, which were concealed in a place where no one would ever have dreamt of finding anything."

By these means did the seamen of those days secure at times large sums of money. In 1812 the *Caroline* was paid off at Portsmouth, after having been eighteen years in commission. Some of the crew were entitled to £2000 prize money, in addition to an accumulation of ten years' wages.

Possessed of wealth such as that, the seamen's hilarity knew no bounds. Their one aim was to spend their money. Devious and ingenious ways were adopted to get rid of it. One fore-mast man at Plymouth, who had just received £700 and twenty-four hours' leave of absence, hired three carriages and four—one for his hat, another for his stick, and a third for himself—and in this fashion rode about the streets of the town from public-house to public-house till the expiration of his day of liberty.

The most interesting stories of the way prize money was disposed of are related in the memoirs of Colonel Landmann, who served from 1789 onwards. Referring to Plymouth at the close of the century, he declares it was full of gaiety.

"Fore Street was almost crowded with the officers of the Navy and Army — the former swimming in prize money — whilst the dillys (hackney chariots) plying between Dock and Plymouth, *vid* Stonehouse, at sixpence each person, or eighteenpence for the whole, were continually not only filled with sailors, but covered by them, all anxious to expend large sums of money, which had just been paid them in guineas, and which they were frequently seen carrying about the streets in their hats under their arms. A sailor in those days had no idea of saving up anything for the future. His only thought was to get rid of his money, and to such an extent was this desire for squandering it carried, that I recollect being on board the *Swiftsure* with Captain Phillip, when a sailor, carrying a pewter pint-pot in his hand nearly full of guineas, came to his captain on deck, and begged very earnestly to be allowed to go on shore for the remainder of the day, in order to expend his prize money. Phillip knew the man, and stiffly refused his petition; the man soon reduced his demand to 'one hour on shore, if you please, dear Captain, and I promise you most sincerely to have then spent the last guinea.'

"'No,' replied Phillip. 'I know you will not return but when brought on by force,' and quickly turned towards the cabin.

"The sailor again, hat in hand, followed his commanding officer, begging for leave to go in the boat about to push off for the shore, and assuring the Captain that he would remain in sight of the

officer in charge of the boat; he was denied.

"'Then,' exclaimed the tar, as he uttered a deep groan, 'what's the use of money if a man can't get leave to spend it?' and at the same time he dashed the pot of guineas overboard, and hastened away to the forecastle without uttering another word."

The general waste of money by the seamen was appalling. Another instance is related by the Colonel which he witnessed at Mutton Cove, Plymouth. He observed a group of sailors, women, and Jews anxiously watching some proceedings going on within a ring they formed. Being attracted to the spot, he perceived two sailors sitting on the ground, each of them holding a shoe by the toe and with the heels hammering a watch to pieces, whilst there were several other watches lying by their sides, seemingly waiting to undergo the same operation.

"I was quickly informed by some of the lookers-on that the two watch-pounders were 'poor fellows whose hard-hearted captains, not allowing them one hour's liberty on shore to spend the prize money they had that day received, amounting to more than £70 apiece, had obliged them to remain on the waterside in sight of the middy in charge of the boat.'

"To all the women looking on they had behaved with great liberality, by dividing amongst them a great portion of the money, and I was further informed that they were now endeavouring to get rid of the remainder by breaking watches.

"'But tell me,' said I, 'how and by what rule they are going on?'

"'Why,' said a large heavy-looking woman with short petticoat and bloated face, 'I don't suppose it's of any use to tell you nothing about it. The way on it is, they buys a dozen of them there watches for £5 apiece, from that tall half-starved Jew as you sees t'other side; but they isn't worth £1 apiece, God bless you, and then they goes to work and tries which can beat to crumbs his half first for a glass of grog all round.'"

These exploits of the captors and the extortions of the Courts have faded into insignificant history, when viewed to-day after the cataclysm from which the world has only recently emerged.

Yet even to-day there is a savour of unpleasantness about the distribution of prize money. An official balance-sheet of all payments and expenses from the Admiralty would be a document of absorbing interest to the Navy at large. Procrastination and the excuses that have been proffered to insistent questions in the House of Commons have accentuated the feeling in the Senior Service that there might have been a more expeditious division of the money earned during the war.

The consoling feature about the present distribution of the 50s. shares is that the awards are not subject to income-tax. That, at least, is some small solace.

THE MAD MULLAH OF BRITISH SOMALILAND.

EVEN those most interested in the march of events in our outposts of empire had very nearly forgotten Somaliland and her long-standing problem, when it was announced last February that the Mad Mullah's dervishes had been utterly routed and destroyed, and that with the assistance of a few aeroplanes a twenty-one years' war had been ended in as many days, at a cost which was as trifling in money as it was in blood (two native soldiers killed). If our imperial enthusiasts could scarcely recall the position in Somaliland, it is hardly a matter for surprise that the general attitude towards an event of no small importance in Africa and the Middle East should be that portrayed by "Mr Punch," when he announced in the same breath that Willesden had won the London Draughts Championship, and that the Mad Mullah of Somaliland had been beaten again. This paper, then, is an attempt to enlighten those who may wish to be enlightened about Somaliland, by tracing the causes and the history of the Mullah's movement, and by giving some very brief description of the recent operations.

Fifty years ago, Ismail I., Khedive of Egypt, acquired from the Porte the Somali coast from Berbera to Zeyla. In 1884, however, difficulties in the Sudan constrained the Egyptian Government to evacuate their Somali colony; and early in the following year Great Britain concluded separate treaties with six of the eight Somali tribes now living under its protection. Thus some 58,000 square miles were added to our African empire, and an important littoral on the main sea route to India came under British suzerainty.

Responsibility for this newly-acquired possession devolved upon the Government of India until 1898, when, with a view to the development of the resources of the interior, the administration was transferred to the Foreign Office. This projected development would, doubtless, have proceeded along lines similar to those followed in our other Crown Colonies and Protectorates, had it not been for the ambitions of one man, who for twenty-one years successfully defied the power of the British Government.

Mohammed bin Abdullah Hassan, better known as the Mad Mullah, was born in the interior of Somaliland, some say at Kirrit, in the late 'sixties, his father an Ogaden Somali, his mother a Somali of the Dolbahanta tribe. His boyhood was much like that of other Somali boys, spent sometimes with his fellow-tribesmen and their stock in the interior, sometimes in Berbera. Now and again, perhaps, he voyaged in some friendly buggalow carrying Somali produce, hides and *ghee* and

sheep, to Aden and the Arabian coast. Be this as it may, when he was about seventeen or eighteen, he determined to see the world, and is said to have enrolled at Aden as a fireman in one of the liners plying between East and West. His employment in this capacity must have greatly influenced his future career. For, doubtless, at Egyptian ports in native *caravanserais* he often listened awestruck to many a strange story of the Mahdi from the mouths of refugees from the Sudan. Following on his experiences at sea, Mohammed having now fully attained to man's estate, made the pilgrimage to Mecca — a journey which is the common ambition of all Somalis. So impressed was he by what he heard and saw that he made several subsequent journeys to the sacred city, joining the Mohammed Salih, an insignificant but fanatical Mohammedan sect, whose tenets are of a harsh and uncompromising nature as compared with those of the Kadariyah, which is the predominant sect in Somaliland. On his return from the last of these pilgrimages in 1895, he gained some notoriety in Berbera by denouncing certain practices of the Kadariyah to somewhat bored and unsympathetic audiences. With all the strident fervency of a born agitator he would inveigh against the luxury of the age, the immorality of chewing "kat,"[1] or the gluttony of gorging the fat of sheep's tail. For a living he depended upon the alms of the charitable; and there is an old Arab woman in Berbera who has often wondered whether he would repay the four annas she lent him in the days of his need should the opportunity ever offer. He gained but few adherents among the comparatively sophisticated inhabitants of Berbera, and so in 1899 he repaired to the interior, where he lived in the Nogal valley among his mother's kin. Here he started a movement advocating the expulsion of the British infidel from his Mohammedan country. Many adherents flocked to his banner. Some were fired by his religious and political teaching. Others were attracted by promises of the wealth to be gained by raiding the stock of those tribes which espoused the infidel's cause. Others again were inspired by a dual motive, religious and material: they saw an admirable opportunity to lay up for themselves treasure in the Mohammedan paradise by confiscating other tribes' treasure upon earth. For three years the Mullah disciplined his followers, eradicating the tribal feeling, which is normally one of the chief characteristics of the Somalis, and substituting his own authority for that of the elders of the tribes. Then early in 1899 he perpetrated his first overt act of hostility to the British Government. Suddenly swooping down upon Burao, a consider-

[1] A herb of very stimulating qualities.

able native centre some eighty miles from Berbera, he raided the wealthy Habr Yunis tribe, and forced a section of the Dolbahanta to join him. After the raid, his fighting men were estimated to number 3000.

If one would understand the full meaning of the Mullah's movement in Somaliland, it is desirable to pause here to examine more closely its leader's original motives. In the initial stages the political and racial object of the movement was the substitution of the Mullah's authority for that of the tribal headman and the infidel overlord. In other words, it was a nationalist movement. Such a project could not but appeal to the Somali. Semitic in origin, of a high standard of intelligence, and imbued with more than his fair share of that useful but dangerous gift of self-confidence, he boasted strong nationalist tendencies —up to 1910. In that year, however, the British Government evacuated the interior of Somaliland, leaving the tribesmen to their own devices. Three years of Somali self-government and the most terrible carnage ensued, during which it is estimated that one-third of the total population was exterminated, with the result that since the reoccupation of 1913 the Somali has exhibited a very keen appreciation of the benefits conferred on his country by an impartial British administration. At the time of the Mullah's rise, however, the call to a national banner was well calculated to make an eloquent appeal to the Somali's spirit of independence.

Then there was the religious plank to the Mullah's platform. While one would yield to no one in admiration of the excellent moral qualities possessed by the Somali, and although it is undeniable that his high code of morality is partly attributable to his religion, one is constrained to admit that superstition plays the largest part in his religious concepts. It was on this superstition that the Mullah traded when he first embarked on his mission rather than on any readiness to accept new beliefs for old. At the same time, there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the Mullah's conversion to the Mohammed Salih doctrines, or the sincerity of his desire to impose the sterner teaching of this sect upon his fellow-countrymen in replacement of the milder tenets of the Kadariyah. But unquestionably he was at far greater pains to encourage a belief in the sanctity of his own person. Nor was he ill-advised. Throughout the twenty-one years of his revolt it has been to him an invaluable and an inalienable asset. Many are the stories of his miraculous powers which are told and believed, not by his followers only but by all Somalis alike. Before his rise, he was once seen reclining outside Berbera, pushing the town into the sea with his feet. At the instance of one of his followers, however, he refrained from giving the town a final kick into the Gulf of

Aden—to the everlasting regret of those who are now compelled to reside in Berbera's unpleasant climate. He was generally believed to possess an amulet, with secret life-saving powers, presented to him by a well-known *shaitan*, or devil, at the request of a lady lizard whose life he had magnanimously spared. Or, again, when "Z" Squadron of the Royal Air Force arrived in Somaliland to join the recent expedition, *on dit* in the town of Berbera that the Mullah was quite undismayed; that, on hearing the news, he had pointed out six hawks which were circling around his *haroun* at Medishe, and at a word from him they had fallen dead at his feet. So would he deal with the infidel airmen! If such stories gained credence among his enemies, one might well ask what his followers may not have believed.

When once the nationalists and the superstitious had been gathered to his banner, the Mullah had *nolens volens* to appeal to yet another quality possessed by his fellow-countrymen—their pugnacity. Inter-tribal fighting and raiding constitute the Somali's national sport. To live, it was necessary for the Dervishes to have cattle and camels, sheep and goats, to give meat and milk. This could only be achieved by looting the friendly tribes which espoused the infidel's cause. Such a prospect was irresistible to the poor and bellicose Somali, to whom a share in such raids would spell affluence; while to the rich and timorous Somali, whose grazing grounds were in the vicinity of the Mullah's activities, adherence to his cause was in the first years of the rising almost the only form of life and property insurance available.

The Dervishes, thus collected from motives good and bad, were ruled by a terrible discipline. For the most trivial offences, mutilation and torture and death were the recognised punishments. Death, indeed, was meted out to those who were only suspected of offences. On one occasion 66 men were murdered because it was thought that they contemplated desertion. On another occasion, 300 women were mutilated and executed because the Mullah dreamt they would not pray. Whenever a Dervish succeeded in deserting, all his family, and possibly all his section, would be killed. But terrible as were the punishments which the Mullah inflicted on his peccant Dervishes, they were surpassed by the atrocities perpetrated by the Dervishes on the friendly tribes—men, women, and children—whose villages were successfully raided. None escaped the most revolting mutilation; none escaped death. Yet, in the House of Commons, a distinguished Nationalist once described the Mullah and his Dervishes as "brave men striving to be free."

It is noteworthy that, as the years passed by, the political, racial, and religious motives which originally inspired the

movement became less and less prominent; and that the Dervish horde was kept together only by the sure knowledge that desertion would entail the murder of their women and children and relatives, as well as the loss of their stock, and by the generally accepted belief, carefully fostered in the *haroun*, that successful deserters were subjected by the British Government to tortures even more terrible than those practised in the Dervish camp.

Although the similarity is more apparent than real, it is difficult to consider the Dervish movement in Somaliland without making some comparison with Mahdism in the Sudan. The rebellion of the Mahdi was primarily a revolt against the injustices and corruption of the Egyptian officials, which had turned fertility into scarcity, and the native content of the savage into the misery of the oppressed. The Dervish movement in Somaliland was also a revolt against the rule of the foreigner, but against a foreigner who had come to give peace to warring tribes, to replace corruption by justice, and penury by prosperity. The political revolt in the Sudan was only made possible by the fire of religion or fanaticism, call it what you will, which the Mahdi kindled in the humble breasts of his starving and naked followers, uniting them proudly under his inspiring leadership. The Somaliland Mullah also invested his political object, the expulsion of the foreigner, with the glamour of a divine mission. In the Sudan, the Mahdi turned indifferent Mohammedans suffering from political oppression into fanatics and patriots. In Somaliland, the Mullah traded upon the superstition and independent spirit of his fellow-countrymen to convert them into robbers and cut-throats. In short, Somaliland dervishism was but a despicable imitation of a genuine patriotic and religious revolt.

To resume, the Mullah followed up his first *coup* of April 1899 by a further successful foray against the Habr Yunis in August, and he reoccupied Burao with a force estimated at 5000 men. He gave himself out as the Mahdi; and ominous rumours spread foretelling an advance on Berbera. The Consul-General urged an expedition on the Home Government, but our commitments elsewhere, more particularly in South Africa, were such as to preclude the immediate adoption of this course. During the first seven months of 1900, the Mullah was comparatively inactive, but in August he suddenly swooped down upon the Aidegalla tribe and caused all the friendly tribes to evacuate the Haud in confusion. Next month the Habr Awal tribe suffered severely at his hands.

It would be superfluous to discuss here in any detail the campaigns which followed. They are exhaustively described in the 'Official History of the Operations in Somaliland, 1901,

04,' published by the War Office in 1907; and it will be sufficient for the purposes of this paper to outline very briefly the general course of events.

The first expedition started in April 1901, and operations terminated in the following July. The force employed consisted of a locally-enlisted and hurriedly-trained levy of 1500 men, of whom 500 were mounted. The casualties inflicted on the Dervishes were estimated at some 1200 killed and wounded, and, in addition, 800 prisoners were taken, including some notable headmen.

The Mullah's power had thus been appreciably shaken, and for a time he remained quiescent. But not for long. In October 1901 he renewed his activities, and, thanks to the illicit arms traffic, he had, by January 1902, not only recovered from his losses, but had forced the majority of the Dolbahanta tribe to return to his standard. By the time our second expedition was launched in June 1902, his following was estimated at 15,000, of whom 12,000 were said to be mounted and 1500 armed with rifles. Against this, our Expeditionary Force consisted of some 2000 rifles, partly King's African Rifles, but principally locally-enlisted and locally-trained Somalis. During this expedition, which culminated in the severe but successful action fought at Erigo in October 1902, the Dervishes sustained some 1400 casualties, lost a large number of prisoners and some 25,000 camels, in addition to many sheep, cattle, and horses. But disorganised transport and the shaken *moral* of the Somali levies prevented the pursuit of the Mullah to his retreat in the Mudug district.

It was now evident that the situation was such as to demand regular and seasoned troops. At the time of the action of Erigo, the force in Somaliland had consisted of 2400 rifles, of which no less than 1500 were local levies. This force was immediately increased by a further contingent of 900 King's African Rifles, and by 300 Indian infantry. A strong column was to advance from Obbia in Italian Somaliland and occupy the Mudug. Another column was to operate on the Berbera-Bohotleh line. And, simultaneously, an Abyssinian force of 5000 rifles, accompanied by British officers, was to advance along the Webi Shebeli, to prevent the Mullah's retreat westward. The advance from Obbia commenced on the 22nd February 1903; and the enemy immediately fell back on Walwal and Wardair, denying us an opportunity of trying conclusions with his main force. On two occasions, however, small advance parties engaged large forces of Dervishes. At Gumburu, a reconnaissance of two companies of the 2nd King's African Rifles and 48 rifles of the 2nd Sikhs came up with the Mullah's main force, commanded, so it is said, by their chief in person. The fight which ensued appears to have lasted two and a half hours. The Dervishes charged the Brit-

ish square from dense bush some 300 to 600 yards distant, their horsemen and riflemen being driven back time and again with cruel losses. The square was eventually broken by a rush of spearmen, but not before all our ammunition had been exhausted. The Dervish casualties, estimated by some at 2700, are unknown: for no British officer survived to tell the true story of Gumburu. Our casualties were all officers (9) and 187 men killed and 29 men wounded. Another action at Daratoleh—in which were engaged some 800 Dervishes, flushed with their victory at Gumburu, with their leaders wearing the uniforms of the dead British officers—resulted in the infliction of heavy casualties on the enemy, our losses amounting to 2 officers and 13 men killed, and 4 officers and 25 men wounded. In the meantime the Abyssinians inflicted a crushing defeat on the Dervishes, claiming to have killed 1000 of their spearmen. Immediately after this engagement, which took place on the 31st May 1903, the Mullah made a daring but successful movement eastward to the Nogal valley. Unfortunately, however, it was impossible to intercept this movement, as, owing to camel transport and other difficulties, our troops were being withdrawn to Bohotleh.

His Majesty's Government now decided on a further increase to our force in Somaliland in view of the Mullah's position in the Nogal and its proximity to our sphere. More than 8000 troops, of which 1000 were British, were employed, in the hope that the Mullah's power would be permanently shattered. The enemy's force, which numbered between 6000 and 8000 fighting Dervishes, was concentrated at Jidballi, where the Mullah, deciding to make a stand, received a most crushing defeat. His casualties in the actual fight at Jidballi (10th January 1904) must have been very large; but far greater were his losses during the course of his subsequent flight northwards to Jidali, and thence eastward into Italian territory. On the other hand, our casualties were slight, except in officers, of whom 3 were killed and 9 wounded, out of a total of 27 killed and 37 wounded of all ranks. It appears that the Mullah only sought sanctuary in Italian territory after receiving solemn assurances of a safe passage from Osman Mahmoud, the Sultan of the Mijjertein, the Italian Somali tribe, who was equally solemnly pledged to us to prevent him from crossing the Italian frontier. Had it not been for this breach of faith, the Mullah would doubtless have had no alternative but to surrender.

Thus, this fourth expedition was completely successful in all but bringing the Mullah himself to bay, and so putting an end to his movement. The greater portion of his wealth, which among a desert-dwelling nomad people consists of the flocks and herds upon which their very existence depends,

had been captured. The *moral* of his Dervishes as a fighting body had been utterly destroyed; and their numbers, estimated at 6000 to 8000 before Jidballi, could not have exceeded 800 on the conclusion of the campaign. Above all, the Mullah's personal prestige was temporarily shattered; and the discredited refugee in Italian territory must have cut a poor figure as compared with the defiant enemy who, during the third expedition, indited the following letter to the British people:—

"I wish to rule my own country and protect my own religion. If you will, send me a letter saying whether there is to be peace or war. I intend to go from Burao to Berbera. I warn you of this—I wish to fight with you. I like war, but you do not. God willing, I will take many rifles from you, but you will get no rifles or ammunition from me. I have no forts, no houses, no country. I have no cultivated fields, no silver, no gold for you to take. I have nothing. If the country were cultivated or contained houses or property, it would be worth your while to fight. The country is all jungle, and that is of no use to you. If you want wood and stone, you can get them in plenty. There are also many ant-heaps. The sun is very hot. All you can get from me is war—nothing else. I have met your men in battle, and have killed them. We are greatly pleased at this. Our men who have fallen in battle have won paradise. God fights for us. We kill, and you kill. We fight by God's order. That is the truth. We ask for God's blessing. God is with me when I write this. If you wish for war, I am happy; and, if you wish for peace, I am content also. But if you wish for peace, go away from my country back to your own. If you wish for war, stay where you are. Hearken to my words. I wish to exchange a machine-gun[1] for ammunition. If you do not want it, I will sell it to some one else. Send me a letter saying whether you desire war or peace."

In March 1905, the Illig or Pestalozza Agreement was concluded between the Italian Government and the Mullah, whereby peace was declared between the Dervishes on the one hand and the British and Italian Governments on the other. The Mullah was assigned a port and certain territories in Italian Somaliland, beyond which he and his Dervishes undertook not to encroach. The Mullah also agreed to become an Italian protected subject. This agreement was, however, nullified soon after it was concluded, as the Mullah left Italian territory, and by 1907 had re-established himself on the British side, raiding and looting far and wide.

In 1909 the Home Government decided upon a change

[1] *Scil.*, a machine-gun lost by the King's African Rifles at Erigo in October 1902, and recovered by them in January 1920.

of policy in regard to Somaliland. The administration, military and political, was entirely withdrawn from the interior, and all direct control was abandoned. Active administration was limited to the three coast towns; and the friendly Somali tribes in the interior were given arms and ammunition with which to defend themselves against the Mullah. This policy had been carried into full effect by March 1910. Disorder, which beggars description, ensued. The friendly tribes abandoned themselves to an orgy of internecine warfare, using against each other the arms which had been given them to defend themselves against the common enemy. The motive was not a desire for supreme control on the part of any one tribe, but the Somali's besetting sin of acquisitiveness, which impels him to raid his neighbour's flocks and herds—if he can. It was impossible to control such a situation from Berbera. Loss of confidence in the British Government, the disaffection of Somali Government servants in the coast towns, and a collapse of trade, were the immediate *sequelæ* of this state of unchecked anarchy. In the meantime, the Mullah was not slow to take advantage of so deplorable a situation. By sudden and unexpected attacks upon the friendly tribes, whom he found scattered and unprepared, he obtained the stock, food, clothing, and ammunition which he so urgently required; and by the ineffable atrocities and mutilations which he practised upon the vanquished, he resuscitated the old dread of the Dervish name.

Such a state of affairs could not be permitted to continue indefinitely; and in 1912, with a view to keeping the main trade routes in the vicinity of the coast towns clear, it was decided to form a small Somali Camel Constabulary, 150 strong, to maintain order among our friendlies within a radius of fifty miles or so of Berbera. This expedient proved an immediate success, and comparative peace was restored among the friendly tribes—so much so that the force, encouraged by initial successes, was subsequently based on Burao, eighty miles inland. But in August 1913 they encountered at Dulmadoba and engaged a party of Dervishes estimated at 2000 rifles. The heaviest casualties—estimated at between 200 and 600—were inflicted on the enemy; but 50 per cent of our small force, including the Commandant, were killed.

After this set-back the Camel Constabulary was reorganised on military lines and its numbers raised to 500, and the Indian contingent was also increased to 400 strong. This addition to the military establishment at the disposal of the Protectorate Government was sanctioned for the purpose of enabling the friendly tribes to avail themselves of their grazing grounds and water without molestation by the Mullah. The objects in view in Somaliland were defined in the House of Lords on the 13th April 1914 by Lord Emmott, then

Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, as being "to keep order in the West, and to prevent the further advance of the Mullah in the East."

Immediately after the action at Dulmadoba the Mullah sent some of his Yemeni Arab masons to erect forts at Shimber Berris, whence the Dervishes could dominate the Ain valley, which provides the chief grazing grounds of our friendly tribes. Six double-storied blockhouses were constructed with considerable skill, and from this stronghold several successful raids were carried out. Operations against the Shimber Berris position were undertaken by the local troops, and despite a stubborn resistance by the Dervish garrison, all the forts were captured and demolished. The Dervishes were completely driven out of the Ain valley, and retired to their main positions at Tale (the Mullah's headquarters) and Jidali.

Our preoccupations elsewhere during the war precluded the necessary reinforcements and auxiliary services being made available for a further active offensive against the Dervishes, to drive them back or to effect their final overthrow, and for nearly five years the local troops were on the defensive, the object being to confine the Dervishes to a limited area and to protect the grazing grounds of the friendlies from Dervish incursions. The initiative thus remained with the enemy; but, despite the fact that our troops had a 300-mile front to defend, from the Makhir coast to Galadi, a very considerable measure of success was achieved. Very seldom were Dervish raiding parties allowed to gain their objective, and on several occasions the severest punishment was meted out to them. To the extreme mobility, endurance, and gallantry of the Somaliland Camel Corps this success was due.

In the meantime, the civil administration was far from idle. From 1914 onwards the interior was gradually reoccupied. The Somali proved himself responsive to an administration which was so clearly bent on furthering his interests, and his confidence was gained to a degree which had never previously been thought possible. Often described as the "Irish of the East," the Somali is notoriously difficult to handle, and the evacuation of 1910 certainly did not decrease his truculent tendencies. Moreover, there was the Turko-German propaganda from the neighbouring Abyssinian province of Harrar to counteract — propaganda which was well calculated to estrange a somewhat fanatical Mohammedan people from their Christian rulers. The various departments of government were reorganised to deal with ever-expanding activities; the local revenue was quadrupled, and the highest efficiency possible with the very small funds[1] available was

[1] Some £50,000 annually for all civil services—*i.e.*, staff, pensions, district administration, medical, police, prisons, customs, public works, post offices, telegraphs, education, &c.

achieved. There was a spirit of enthusiasm abroad among the dozen civil and political officers stationed in Somaliland which could not but spell success in their arduous and difficult task.

Such briefly was the political and military situation in Somaliland when in the autumn of 1919 His Majesty's Government sanctioned offensive operations for the following January, with a view to the final overthrow of the Dervish power. The forces at the disposal of the Protectorate Government for this purpose consisted of one flight of aeroplanes (D.H. 9), Royal Air Force, known as "Z" unit, the Somaliland Camel Corps, (700 rifles), a King's African Rifles Contingent (700 rifles), 1st/101st Grenadiers, Indian Army (400 rifles), and his Majesty's ships *Odin*, *Clio*, and *Ark Royal*.

The operations commenced on the 21st January with an aerial attack on the Mullah's *haroun*[1] at Medishe, near Jidali. It seems that the Dervishes were as unaware of the termination of the Great War as they were of the existence of aviation. Many were the conjectures as to what the aeroplanes might portend. A few guessed the truth, but feared to communicate their guess to the Mullah, death being the recognised punishment for the bearer of evil tidings. A certain Turk suggested that they were a Turkish or German invention from Stamboul come to tell the Mullah of their victory in the war, and to pay their respects to him. Others, with the Oriental's native *penchant* for flattery, suggested that they were the chariots of Allah come to take the Mullah up to heaven. However that may be, the flight failed to locate the *haroun*, the paramount necessity for secrecy having prevented any aerial reconnaissances, and the Mullah sat watching them with his Dervishes around him in a circle. When the machines had passed by, he returned to his house; but no sooner had he entered than news was brought that one machine had returned and was flying very close to the *haroun*. Thinking that this speedy return indicated that the occupants of the machine wished to speak with him, he left his house, leaning on the arm of his uncle and Prime Minister, Amir. Then the first bomb fell. Amir was killed, and the Mullah's garments were singed. Thus the first shot all but ended the campaign. For the death of the Mullah would have led to the immediate disintegration and surrender of the Dervish forces, except, perhaps, for a few die-hards. On the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th January Medishe and the neighbouring fortress of Jidali were bombed twice daily, but the Mullah found sanctuary in a cave in the hills behind Medishe. On the 27th January he heard that the King's African Rifles were in possession of his fort at Baran. His escape eastward into Italian

[1] *I.c.*, armed encampment.

territory was thus blocked. On the same day he learnt that the Camel Corps had captured his forts at Jidali. The news of these two events was the first intimation he received of the proximity of the ground troops. It was surprising that our intentions were concealed from him so completely, and that his intelligence department failed him so dismally. On hearing of the fall of Baran and Jidali, the Mullah decided to move southwards. Two bandoliers were issued to every Dervish, and instructions were given for the packing and transport of the ammunition, treasure, and machine-guns. On the 28th January, with about 700 riflemen and all the *lares* and *penates* that he could muster, he embarked upon his *hegira*. Two days later the Camel Corps received news of his flight and immediately started in hot pursuit, covering 150 miles in seventy-two hours. During the pursuit and the days that followed no reliable intelligence as to the whereabouts of the Mullah could be obtained, although a large number of his leaders and relatives and followers fell into the hands of the troops or the Somali irregular levy, which was most ably organised and commanded by a political officer, assisted by a well-known Somali native officer. On the 9th February, however, news was received that the Mullah was in Tale, his capital, a walled citadel surmounted by thirteen forts (constructed by the Dervishes between 1907 and 1919, and not by the Egyptians 2000 B.C., as suggested elsewhere). But on the same day, before the troops were in position, he left this stronghold with a small following. The Camel Corps bivouacked about one mile from the main Tale fortress, the whole of which fell into the hands of the tribal levy that night. By dawn, on the next day, the Camel Corps had picked up the Dervish tracks, and a hot pursuit ensued, during which all the remnants of the Dervish force were accounted for except the Mullah himself, his eldest son, a brother, and three trusty followers. Time and again small parties of Dervishes were caught up and annihilated; but the Mullah, seeking safety in isolation, had struck off with one or two others on a line of his own. If a fugitive leader is prepared to abandon his family, his followers, and all his possessions, and seek refuge in the African bush, he becomes a wellnigh impossible objective for a military pursuit.

The march of the Camel Corps from Jidali to the southern border of the Protectorate was a magnificent feat of endurance which deserved to be rewarded by the capture of the Mullah himself. Men and animals were often on half rations—and towards the end on no rations—for their camel transport had been abandoned early; but the pursuit was maintained until there was nothing more to pursue. *Ne plus ultra.*

The Mullah and his four or five followers found their way into uncontrolled Abyssinian territory. Negotiations for his

surrender are now in progress; and, if his surrender does not materialise, there is every reason to hope that he will perish in the continuous inter-tribal fighting in that region. In any event, it is certain that he can never resume his old activities in British territory. His stock, which represents almost his sole means of subsistence, is ours, as is all the rest of his property. The whole of his family (but two) and all his followers have deserted him, or have been killed or captured.

During the expedition many evidences of his atrocities were found—at Medishe the corpse of an unfortunate Dervish who had been chained up and roasted over a slow fire, and in a neighbouring ravine the bodies of many who, at the tyrant's whim, had been hurled from a peak to a terrible death on the rocks below. There were also many evidences of his organising ability: orders regarding the defence of grazing camps and the care of horses which would have done credit to a G.S.O. 1. There were signs, too, that he was alive to his comparative weakness, which many years of attrition had brought about; and it is confirmed that he was plotting last December to obtain the persons of one or two British officers with a view to holding them to ransom, and so obtaining terms which would be acceptable to himself. It would be of interest to know what those terms would have been.

No account of the Mullah would be complete without the story of the adventures of a certain German named Emil Kirsch (or Casson). A mechanic by trade, he had travelled extensively in South and East Africa, mending typewriters and other machines. The outbreak of the Great War found him at Jibouti, the capital of French Somaliland. To avoid internment, he hastened to the neighbouring and neutral country of Abyssinia, where he remained until August 1916. In that month he was sent to the Mullah's *haroun* at Tale by the Mohammedanised, anti-Entente, and subsequently dethroned Prince of Abyssinia, Lij Yasu. It appears that he was given to understand that he was on a five months' contract to make ammunition and to repair the Dervish machine-guns and rifles, and that Lij Yasu was personal security for his safe return. Whether or not he realised the foolhardy nature of his enterprise we shall never know; but, if he did not, he was very soon to be disillusioned. On arrival at Tale he was given quarters in the main fort, where he was virtually a prisoner. However, he immediately set to work mending rifles and manufacturing ammunition; and he received no actual ill-treatment until his savage masters demanded that he should perform impossibilities—manufacture rifles without material and plant, and mend Maxim guns without component parts. Then buffeting and abuse were his lot,

and subsequently, when he asked to be allowed to return to Abyssinia, on the ground that his contract had expired, his request was received not only with threats of mutilation, but with actual manifestations of the most unspeakable atrocities. Thus his last few months at Tale were all but intolerable, and frequently he contemplated suicide. Finally, he decided on an attempt to escape. Day after day, his shoes were filled with sand to harden his feet by his devoted servant Ahmed, a native of Nyasaland, as he realised that his tracks would soon be picked up in the desert by the Dervishes if he attempted to escape in European foot-gear; and then one night in June he let himself down from the fort by means of a long rope and a grappling-iron, and working by compass, he headed for the northern coast with the intention of surrendering at the Italian port of Alula. After many days of wandering without food or water his strength gave out, and he bade his faithful servant leave him and make good his escape if he could. Ahmed staggered on for another three miles, where he found water, with which without delay he returned to his master, only to find him dead under the bush where he had left him. This story is given as related by Ahmed, and subsequently confirmed by deserters; and it may be regarded as reliable. Needless to add, the eight Dervishes who formed his guard were executed as soon as his escape was discovered.

For twenty-one years Dervishism has spelt economic stagnation for Somaliland, and ruin for many of its inhabitants. In the Dervish area of the Protectorate and the districts impinging upon it no security for life or property has been possible. Such money as has been granted from imperial funds—in recent years some £85,000 annually—has been expended on the maintenance of military forces of a magnitude which would have been unnecessary but for the Dervish menace; and no money has been available for the establishment of adequate communications or for other development schemes. As a consequence, the general impression of British Somaliland is that it is politically an unmitigated nuisance and economically a sterile jungle incapable of development. If this false impression is now perpetuated, it can only mean that the country will continue indefinitely to be a burden on the British taxpayer. But if, on the other hand, the money saved by the reduction of the military forces, which is now made possible by the removal of the Dervish scourge, can be made available for the development of the Protectorate's resources, then there is no reason why Somaliland should not take her proper place in the near future among our prosperous and self-supporting African Protectorates.

D. J. JARDINE.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE CASE OF GOVERNOR EYRE—THE TRAGEDY OF AMRITSAR—A PLOT AGAINST EUROPEANS—GENERAL DYER—THREE PROCLAMATIONS OR FOUR?—CONSPIRACY OR REBELLION?—THE RESULTS OF GENERAL DYER'S DISMISSAL—MR GEORGE AND KRASSIN—COMMERCE OR A TREATY OF PEACE?—THE PRIME MINISTER'S TWO VOICES—FRIENDS SACRIFICED TO ENEMIES—PATRICK SHAW-STEWART.

In the year 1865 "the black gentlemen" of Jamaica, stirred up by the harangues of agitators and the spiritual addresses of Baptist ministers, armed themselves with bayonets, cutlasses, and pikes with the kindly intention of murdering all the white men they could find. "We want the Buckra men to kill, but we don't want the women now; we will have them afterwards"—such was the amiable cry that was heard on all sides. The "black gentlemen" murdered with all their own savagery the Custos of Morant Bay; they cut to pieces a small band of volunteers, who made a gallant resistance; they beat policemen to death for no better reason than that they were not afraid to do their duty; they destroyed plantations, and they burned houses. As the historian says, "nothing could exceed the brutality with which the infuriated negroes perpetrated their atrocities. At the court-house the eyes and hearts of some of their victims were torn out, and the women showed themselves even more cruel than the men."

The white men and women, who were but a handful, were saved only by stern and swift measures of repression. Happily, Governor Eyre was a man who did not shrink from responsibility. He went at once to Port Morant with a man-of-war and a gunboat, the only naval forces at his command, and made his dispositions to crush the rebellion. He hanged those who deserved to be hanged, he flogged others, and with the help of martial law he succeeded in saving Jamaica from a far worse massacre than had already drenched it in blood. Wherever he went in the island he found that a coloured member of the House of Assembly, who called himself Gordon, had exercised a malign influence over the natives. This miscreant had taken refuge in Kingston, which lay outside the proclaimed area, and when he saw that sooner or later his capture was inevitable, he gave himself up to General O'Connor. The Governor instantly put him on board the *Wolverine* and sent him to Morant Bay. There was a divided opinion concerning the treatment of Gordon. He was arrested at Kingston, where

martial law was not proclaimed. On the other hand, his home was at Morant Bay, where the insurrection had broken out at his instigation, and his accidental escape to Kingston was not enough to shield him from the consequences of his crime. Moreover, Governor Eyre made quite clear in his despatch the reasons of his prompt action. "Considering it right in the abstract," thus he wrote to the Secretary of State, "and desirable as a matter of policy, that while the poor black men who were being misled were undergoing condign punishment, the chief instigator of all the evils should not go unpunished, I at once took upon myself the responsibility of his capture."

Governor Eyre had saved the lives of all the white survivors. Concerning that fact there was no dispute, and there was indeed no discussion. Even those who condemned him were forced to admit that praise was due to Governor Eyre for "the skill, promptitude, and vigour which he manifested during the early stages of insurrection." But the politicians, bereft of imagination, and packed with the futile sentimentality of the moment, took alarm. Governor Eyre had saved the lives of white men by punishing instantly and severely a band of black rebels. That was enough to set John Stuart Mill and P. A. Taylor, whose literal minds could not picture the horror of a black rising, on the war-path. They made the usual speeches in the House of Commons, full of inflammatory falsehood. They clamoured for the recall or suspension of Governor Eyre, and saw their baleful wishes gratified. They urged the Government to send out a commission of inquiry, and they were rewarded with one of those timid reports, familiar to us all, which are glad to wound and afraid to strike. These gratifications did not content them. They pursued Governor Eyre, who had saved their compatriots from murder and ravishing, most acrimoniously with charges of murder. In 1867 Messrs John Stuart Mill and Peter Taylor applied at Market Drayton for "a warrant against Mr Eyre on the charge of having been accessory before the fact to the murder of Mr George W. Gordon." The warrant was refused. The sleuth-hounds, hot upon the track of their victim, would not desist. The following year they made a similar application at Bow Street, and suffered a second repulse. They were sure, these good people, who lived at home at ease, that Governor Eyre had no right to proclaim martial law. No doubt he should have written home for instructions from the Government, and witnessed while he waited for a reply, if indeed he were alive to witness, the massacre of his fellow-countrymen. He should have permitted the worst criminal of them all, the man Gordon, to complete the infamous work he had done at Morant Bay by stirring up all the disaffected

rascals in Kingston to rebel. Such is the fatuity of politicians, who pretend to believe that savage countries should be tried always by the standards which prevail in their own suburbs, and that the policeman at the corner should be sent to argue politely with the madman who is resolved to kill him.

Happily, Governor Eyre found true and wise supporters in England. Lord Derby had the courage to plead his cause in the House of Lords. And Carlyle, to his honour be it said, did not hesitate to assail "the knot of rabid Nigger-Philanthropists barking ferociously in the gutter." He at any rate had a firm faith in martial law. "In the same direction," said he, "we have also our remarkable Jamaica Committee; and a Lord Chief-Justice speaking six hours . . . to prove that there is no such thing, nor ever was, as Martial Law;—and that any governor, commanded soldier, or official person, putting down the frightfullest Mob-insurrection, Black or White, shall do it with the rope round *his* neck, by way of encouragement to him. Nobody answers this remarkable Lord Chief-Justice, 'Lordship, if you were to speak for six hundred years instead of six hours, you would only prove the more to us that, unwritten if you will, but real and fundamental, anterior to all written laws, and first making written laws *possible*, there must have been, and is, and will be, coeval with Human Society, from its first beginnings to its ultimate end, an actual *Martial Law*, of more validity than any other law whatever.'"

Enveloped in this cloud of rhetoric are the only security of life and the only sanction of government. But Great Britain is slow to learn the simplest lessons of history, and the wise courage of Governor Eyre has sunk as deeply into forgetfulness as the brutal excesses of the Nigger-Philanthropists. And now once more we are confronted with the same problem. Once more a brave man is thrown to the wolves of the ballot-box. The tragedy of Amritsar resembles in all points the tragedy of Jamaica. The two reports show the painful uniformity of the official brain, and they might have been signed by the same hands. In each is manifest a fear to acknowledge the facts, a plain determination to find the verdict which would be agreeable to a pusillanimous government. The gentlemen who examined the case of Governor Eyre applauded his resolution and approved his suspension. The gentlemen who investigated the conduct of General Dyer paid him the same barren compliment that was thrown at Governor Eyre, and by their censure made it easy for the Secretary of State to disgrace him. At Amritsar, as in Jamaica, the man who saved his fellow-countrymen from murder and his fellow-countrywomen from outrage, is branded as a felon by pedants who were never asked

to face anything more dangerous than a legal quibble, and the wonder is that the British Government ever finds faithful servants to do its bidding.

On 10th April 1919 there was a violent rebellion at Amritsar. A "hartal," or general shutting of shops, had been ordered by the rebel leaders. A poster, inviting the people to "die and kill," had been displayed in the Clock-tower, and the invitation had been generally accepted. If the people was unwilling to die, it was at least eager to kill; and when two doctors, efficient stirrers up of strife, called Kitchlew and Satyapal, were very justly deported, the mob marvellously increased in bitterness and violence. "Where is the Deputy-Commissioner?" it asked; "we will butcher him to pieces." Speedily the crowd gathered volume until it numbered some 30,000, and passed with little delay from words to deeds. The rebels began their work of destruction with the banks. They beat to death the manager and assistant-manager of the National Bank, burned their bodies, and set on fire and sacked the building. With the greed that commonly accompanies the lust of blood, they threw open the godowns to all those who were willing to loot them. Then they turned their amiable attention to the Alliance Bank, murdered its manager, and flung his body from the balcony into the street, where it was drenched in kerosene oil and burned. With characteristic care, the building itself was not destroyed, because it belonged to Indians who, having butchered the manager, were not willing to sacrifice their rent. Presently, having battered in Sergeant Rowlands' skull with a straining screw, they encountered Miss Sherwood, a lady missionary, peacefully bicycling in a narrow street on her way to one of her schools. Here was too good a chance to be missed. The intrepid mob knocked her down by blows on the head, and when she was safely on the ground they beat her unmercifully. The poor woman got up to run, and again and again she was knocked down. When she attempted to take refuge in a house, the door was slammed in her face, and the monsters desisted from torturing her only because they thought that she was dead.

That the rebellion expressed from the very first a murderous hatred of Europeans is not in dispute. The mob cried aloud for the deaths, not of officials merely, but of all Europeans. What could be done to restore order was done immediately, and that the ever-increasing mob might have a fair warning, a proclamation was issued forbidding all gatherings of persons and processions, and urging all respectable persons to keep indoors. On the evening of April 11th General Dyer arrived at Amritsar and took command. That there might be no mistake concerning his policy, he supplemented the

first proclamation by another. "The inhabitants of Amritsar," said he, "are hereby warned that if they will cause damage to any property or will commit any acts of violence in the environs of Amritsar, it will be taken for granted that such acts are due to incitement in Amritsar city, and offenders will be punished according to military law. All meetings and gatherings are hereby prohibited, and will be dispersed at once under military law." It might be thought that this warning was clear enough to check the murderous ardour of the mob. It had little or no effect. The outrages continued unabated. The telegraph wires were cut, railway lines were torn up, and a train was derailed. Accordingly, General Dyer, with infinite patience and restraint, made another attempt to recall the rebels to reason with words. On April 13th he issued the proclamation that follows by beat of drum: "No person residing in the Amritsar city is permitted to leave his house after eight. Any persons found in the streets after eight are liable to be shot. . . . Any procession or any gathering of four men will be looked upon and treated as an unlawful assembly, and dispersed by force of arms if necessary." The people, hearing this proclamation read, refused to treat it seriously. On all hands it was dismissed as mere bluff. "The General will not fire," said the rebels. "You need not be afraid."

It is necessary to cite the proclamations with some care, because General Dyer was presently condemned for not having sufficiently warned the people. No warning would have been sufficient. The rebellion suffered no check. The day after he had made his proclamation by beat of drum, General Dyer was informed that a meeting was being held at Jallianwala Bagh, contrary to his plain order. He fired upon the mob, which, as we are told, believed that his order was a "bluff," and he achieved his object by the only possible means—the display of adequate and determined force. Had he thought more of his career than of the safety of India, he would have forgotten his duty and stayed his hand. But he is a brave far-seeing man, and he knew that in the midst of a revolution the mob must be taught a lesson. The same fate overtook him that overtook Governor Eyre, that has overtaken unnumbered servants of the Empire. The pedants who sat to try him, and who did not disdain to call him as a witness, to be used, if necessary, against himself, had no difficulty in finding such a verdict as should be agreeable to the government. In brief, they found that General Dyer was "open to criticism (1) because he gave the people no warning; (2) because he continued to fire after the crowd began to disperse." The first plea is obviously ridiculous. The rebellious mob received not one warning, but three. It laughed at them all, and pronounced them "bluff."

Judging General Dyer by the British Government, it was convinced that he would not dare to shoot, and that there was nothing to be afraid of. Of what use, then, would a fourth or a fortieth warning have been? The warnings would have been unheeded, and General Dyer would have been condemned, whatever he had done. But it is necessary to put it on record that he is dismissed from his command and from India because three warnings and not four were given to the apostles of revolution.

Nor can General Dyer be blamed because he continued to fire. His own explanation is perfectly truthful and candid. "I fired, and continued to fire," says he, "until the crowd dispersed, and I consider this is the least amount of firing which would produce the necessary moral and widespread effect which it was my duty to produce, if I was to justify my action. If more troops had been at hand, the effect would have been greater in proportion. It was no longer a question of dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect from a military point of view, not only on those who were present, but more especially throughout the Punjab. There could be no question of undue severity." The gentlemen who drew up the report regard General Dyer's conception of duty as mistaken, and the government agrees with them. Mr Montagu, who has hastened to endorse the report, and to fling his own stones at General Dyer, asserts that it is the policy of the Government to use the minimum of force necessary when military action is required in support of the civil authority. So there's an end of it. General Dyer, having displayed "honesty of purpose and unflinching adherence to his conception of his duty," is regarded as no longer "fitted to remain entrusted with the responsibilities which his rank and position impose upon him." He is therefore directed to resign his appointment, and his case will be referred to the Army Council. We congratulate General Dyer on having incurred the insolent censure of Mr Montagu. We congratulate him also on his prospect of seeing his case examined by a body of soldiers who are not intimidated by the voters, and who have no natural love of agitators and incendiaries.

But in order to justify themselves, the gentlemen who drew up the report were obliged to declare that there had been no conspiracy at all. To put up a poster upon the Clock-tower, calling on the people to die and kill is, then, no sign of conspiracy. They who preach to a willing audience a bitter war against Europeans are not conspiring. It is no proof of a conspiracy when a mob, some thousands strong, burns banks and murders their managers with every circumstance of venomous brutality. The blood of white men, no doubt, may be shed with impunity. It is the consistent opinion of our

Government that murderers deserve no censure, and that they who defend themselves righteously must be called upon to justify their indiscretion. Lord Hunter's Committee, indeed, takes a view of conspiracy which outside official circles is happily rare, and we do not suppose that any evidence, short of its own extermination, could be brought before it which could convince it that revolution was imminent or possible. "There is nothing to show," it says, "that the outbreak in the Punjab was part of a pre-arranged conspiracy to overthrow the British Government in India by force." And having said so much, it seems to be instantly stricken with doubt and repentance. It then admits incontinently that the Punjab Government had been advised by its legal advisers that the Satyagraha movement, which was in full force, "amounted to an illegal conspiracy against government." Nor does this admission stand alone. As though to make quite clear the flagrant injustice that had been done to General Dyer, the Committee proceeds to the following confession: "The general teaching of the doctrine of civil disobedience to laws to masses of uneducated men must inevitably lead to breach of the peace and disorder. . . . In the situation, as it presented itself day by day, there were grounds for the gravest anxiety. It was difficult, probably unsafe, for the authorities not to assume that the outbreak was the result of a definite organisation. Apart from the existence of any deeply-laid scheme to overthrow the British, a movement which had started in rioting and had become a rebellion might have rapidly developed into a revolution."

If these words mean anything, they mean a complete exoneration of General Dyer. There were grounds for the gravest anxiety; it was unsafe not to assume that the outbreak was the result of a definite organisation; a movement which had become a rebellion might have rapidly developed into a revolution. And General Dyer, in staying the revolution, which might have been far worse than the famous Mutiny, deserved, instead of the censure of the confused thinkers who condemned him, and who make a distinction between "conspiracy" and "rebellion," to receive immediate promotion and a vote of thanks. Alas! we are forgetting the call of politics. The agitator, at all costs, must be protected in the exercise of his calling. "'Tis no sin," says Falstaff, "for a man to labour in his vocation." And Mr Montagu, in an impudent comment upon Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration, testifies boldly to his agreement with Falstaff. With tears in his eyes he regrets that the Punjab Government, under Sir Michael's O'Dwyer's direction, "was determined to suppress not only illegitimate, but also legitimate and constitutional political agitation." We commend it as a proper

task for those expert dichotomists of the truth, the members of Lord Hunter's Committee, to discover, in the ample leisure they have won by their labours, when and how "agitation" is "legitimate and constitutional" in such a country as India. If they cast their eyes upon Ireland, they will find an interesting parallel. And as for Mr Montagu, whose racial characteristics give him a natural taste for agitation, he need not despair. He has ensured for Great Britain, in which he is a sojourner, many years of the rebellion, which, in the golden words of Lord Hunter's Committee, "develops rapidly into a revolution."

We have not heard the last of General Dyer's case. Even in these days, when the Cabinet is hypnotised and the House of Commons is paralysed, there must still be left one or two just men to speak the truth and to warn the country. In the meantime, it is well to consider the immediate results of General Dyer's dismissal. The unanimity with which the officials condemn him must be consoling to him. With a kind of ferocity the Government of India approves the report of Lord Hunter's Committee, and Mr Edwin Samuel Montagu goes one better than the Government of India. One and all hasten to involve in a cloud of obloquy the man on the spot, who alone was competent to understand what measures should be taken. One and all overlook, though they assert that they do not, their own resolution, "in which they promised full countenance and support to officers engaged in the onerous task of suppressing disorder." General Dyer was engaged in that onerous task, and they have given him neither countenance nor support. Yet it is not for General Dyer that we feel the profoundest sympathy. He knows that he has won the approval of honest men, who still believe that the soldier who saves Englishmen from bloodshed and Englishwomen from outrage has earned the nation's gratitude. It is for those hapless soldiers, administrators, and their wives, who are left to do their duty in India, that we feel the sincerest pity. To the handful of Indians, chiefly agitators, who take an interest in politics, the report of Lord Hunter's Committee, with the unctuous commentaries of the Government of India and of Mr Montagu, will appear a full license to outrage and rebellion. Henceforth they know well that no soldier will dare to suppress a revolution unless he hold in his hand a written permit from a civil magistrate or a Secretary of State. Henceforth all sense of responsibility is stripped away from those in military command. You cannot expect a soldier to do his duty if he knows that the solemn promise of countenance and support is not worth the brittle paper on which it is written. Mr Montagu and his puppets have done something worse than disgrace a gallant soldier. They have rendered the soldier's profession hazardous, if not im-

possible. They have deprived every European in India of security in life or property.

The truth is, our Government cannot make up its mind to do anything. It stands in hourly dread of action. It would far rather overlook the crime of murder than punish the monstrous assassin. It obstinately refuses to forgive the slaughtered victims. Relying for its continuance upon a lawless fringe of anarchists and communists, it shrinks most cravenly from playing the man. It believes, perhaps erroneously, that the just punishment of crime is unpopular, and it views without a strong disapproval the murder of policemen in Ireland and of Europeans in India. But some day or another it will be forced into adopting a definite policy. It may come to the conclusion, like the Radicals of fifty years ago, that "Perish India!" would be a profitable cry at the hustings. In the meantime we are deeply committed to the Government of India. We have ruled the country for more than a century. We have brought peace and prosperity to a fertile land. We have assuaged the feuds which once divided prince from prince and race from race. And we have done all this without outraging the customs or offending the prejudices of a sensitive people. We cannot do what we have done if we allow a minority of two per cent of the population to intimidate us on the false ground of self-determination. Either we must leave India to the confusion and the carnage which surely would follow our departure, or we must govern it as men and not as the puppets of the polling-booth. The hand-to-mouth policy of flattery and sentiment can end only in disaster. Upon Mr Montagu lies the heaviest responsibility. He holds a place which should never have been his, which he should have been disqualified from holding from the mere fact that he is a Jew. It is not his fault that he does not understand the British soldier's conception of his duty. But he will not be absolved when, in the mutiny which he, an Oriental, has done his best to ensure, Englishmen are murdered and Englishwomen are outraged.

While Mr Montagu is doing his best to promote political agitation, "legitimate and constitutional," in India; while he is handing over the 98 per cent peaceable inhabitants to the malign influence of the wire-pullers, whom he loves and fears, Mr George is putting Great Britain under the heavy disgrace of peace with murderers. In other words, Mr George, attended by the silent members of his Cabinet, who take his orders and register his decrees, has received Krassin, the representative of the most brutal and bloody-minded tyrants that ever brought suffering and destruction upon an outraged people. The monsters who employed Chinese assassins to do their hellish work, cynical Jews, men of no country and no associ-

ations, are to-day publicly acclaimed our political friends and equals. Of the many blows that Mr George has struck at England's dignity and England's honour, this is the heaviest, and he can escape from his ignoble position neither by false history nor by inapposite jesting.

We do not suppose he feels any indignation against the scoundrels whom Krassin represents, because they have murdered with an elaborate cruelty the Czar of Russia and his family. Monarchs and princes cannot vote, and are therefore but of small interest to politicians. It is unlikely that Mr George should shed a tear over the unavenged murder of our naval attaché at Petrograd. Naval attachés are not a numerous body and may safely be left to perish. Nevertheless it is well to remember that Mr George is now conferring with a set of miscreants and regicides who murdered an English officer, and who have hitherto refrained from expressing an apology or regret. For this callousness, we believe, there is no precedent, and the prestige of Great Britain has suffered an irreparable blow. Again Mr George will be unmoved. But even he, we should have thought, would have shrunk from taking the hand of those who have murdered and tortured thousands of working men and peasants, and have put to forced labour those whom they have permitted to live. This is hardly work for the self-appointed "champion of the liberty of the world." However, from the very first Mr George could not wholly dissemble his love for Lenin and Trotsky. We all remember the tragi-comedy of Prinkipo. The intercession of Mr Bullitt, whose story remains uncontradicted, is not yet forgotten. Yet, as usual throughout the controversy, Mr George has spoken with two voices. He has abused the Bolsheviks with all the resources of his vocabulary, at the same time that he has paid them assiduous court. He has expressed his horror of Bolshevism a dozen times. He has declared that he would refuse to take it by the hand; he has deplored "its horrible consequences — starvation, bloodshed, confusion, ruin, and horror"; and he has taken it by the hand, making light of its "horrible consequences," and palliating its crimes. Moreover, he has given a solemn undertaking that he would not have any dealings with Russia before he had consulted the House of Commons. And he has received Krassin at Downing Street without previously throwing a word to the elected representatives of the British people.

The same uncertainty has shrouded his dealings with Krassin from all save his obedient servants of the Cabinet. Many stories, contradicting one another, have been told. We have heard that there is to be nothing between us save an agreement of barter.

Then there came a rumour that British goods were to be paid for by ingots of gold, which were not Lenin's to give away. To expect a plain statement from Mr George is obviously absurd. It is perhaps injudicious of him not to settle beforehand which tale he will tell and stick to it. But we shall be wise if we reject the legend of goods for goods, and resign ourselves to play the criminal part of receivers of stolen gold. There is the taint of blood and theft upon every ingot that is offered us by the Bolshevists, and all the idle words poured out by Mr George will not avail to remove the indelible stain. "The horrors of Bolshevism have revolted the conscience of mankind," says Mr George. So come let us trade with the Bolshevists and gorge ourselves upon their bursting granaries!

We are used by this time to Mr George's cynicism. The worst of it is that he is bolstering up the Bolshevism which in other days he condemned without reserve, at the very moment when Bolshevism is dying of its own incompetence and misdeeds. Nor will the defence, which he made in the House of Commons, convince a single waverer. It will persuade those only who are bound in the bonds of slavery, or who believe that the world will come to an end if they lose their seats. Mr George began by declaring that in starving Russia there is grain and oil and flax and timber. He produced no evidence in support of his assertion, and when it is disproved he will not be disconcerted for a moment. Then, said he, "I am told you must not do business, because we disprove of the Government. That surely is a new doctrine." It is not a new doctrine. It was a doctrine preached by Mr George himself a year ago, when he refused to take Bolshevism by the hand. It is a doctrine put into practice at this very hour, when we have kept a strict blockade—itself a form of war—against Russia. It is the doctrine which inspired Pitt and Burke in fighting with all the force at their command against an armed opinion. Mr George, we believe, is not a reader, and perhaps he is not familiar with the writings of Edmund Burke. If he were, he would see at once that the doctrine which he now pretends to be new is not new at all. It was held as stoutly by the statesmen who directed our policy at the time of the French Revolution, as it was held a year ago by himself. When the Regicides of 1796 made overtures of peace, they did it in the same amiable terms as were used by Lenin. Lenin will be satisfied with no pact which does not permit him to propagate his vile opinions. The Regicides declared in 1796 that they would have no peace until they had accomplished our utter and irretrievable ruin. And here is the reply which the Georges of the day received from Edmund Burke: "To this conciliatory and ami-

cable publick communication," wrote the author of the 'Regicide Peace,' "our sole answer, in effect, is this—Citizen Regicides! whenever you find yourselves in the humour, you may have a peace with *us*. That is a point you may always command. We are constantly in attendance, and nothing you can do shall hinder us from the renewal of our supplications. You may turn us out of the door, but we will jump in at the window."

That is the method of speech always adopted by our Georges, whenever they are born into the world, which is, alas! far too frequently. Our own Mr George addresses the Bolshevists as his predecessors addressed the Regicides. There is no window into which he will not jump, though he should know well that Lenin is waiting to catch him, and that the prospect of a peace with Great Britain will be the best stimulus possible to the spreading of his armed opinions. For of course it need not be said that the arrangement made with Krassin is no mere arrangement to trade; if it be persisted in, it will grow into nothing less than a solid treaty of peace with regicides and assassins, a pledge of forgiveness to those who have foully murdered and imprisoned British officials and British citizens.

Then, asks Mr George, in contradiction to his own former statements and with complete irrelevancy: "Have we never traded with countries guilty of atrocities?" It is possible that we have. We have never traded with countries which spend their money in debauching our citizens, nor have we ever made peace with countries whose rulers have killed our representatives in cold blood and have refused apology and reparation. But Mr George, not content with unsaying all the valiant things which he had formerly said about the horrors of Bolshevism, assumed in his speech that the latest set of opinions which he had held were nothing less than axioms. And then he proceeded to make the sort of careless jests which may be acceptable on the hustings, but which are wholly out of place in a debate before the House of Commons on a question of high policy affecting the honour and the safety of the British Empire. However, it may be that Mr George knows his audience, and is right in believing that his own sorry provincialism is good enough to deceive the elect of the British people.

Thus, through a tangle of contradictions, we begin to understand what it is that Mr George has committed us to. We may dismiss as a pretence, now some weeks old, the assertion that our only engagement with Russia is to barter goods for goods. If the negotiations proceed we shall soon hear of the arrival from Russia of gold and platinum. And when the gold and platinum have arrived, which Lenin has no right to send, and Mr George has no right to accept, we shall hear the office of the "fence" de-

fended with the familiar levity. The next step will be the announcement of a firm peace between the Court of St James's and the Soviet Government. Thus at last will the dream of Prinkipo come true, and Mr Bullitt will be justified of the confidence which he is said to have reposed in Mr Philip Kerr. It is a disgraceful story, which will be written in black upon the tablets of our history, and the only chance that we have of retrieving our national honour is that Lenin himself will go back upon his bargain.

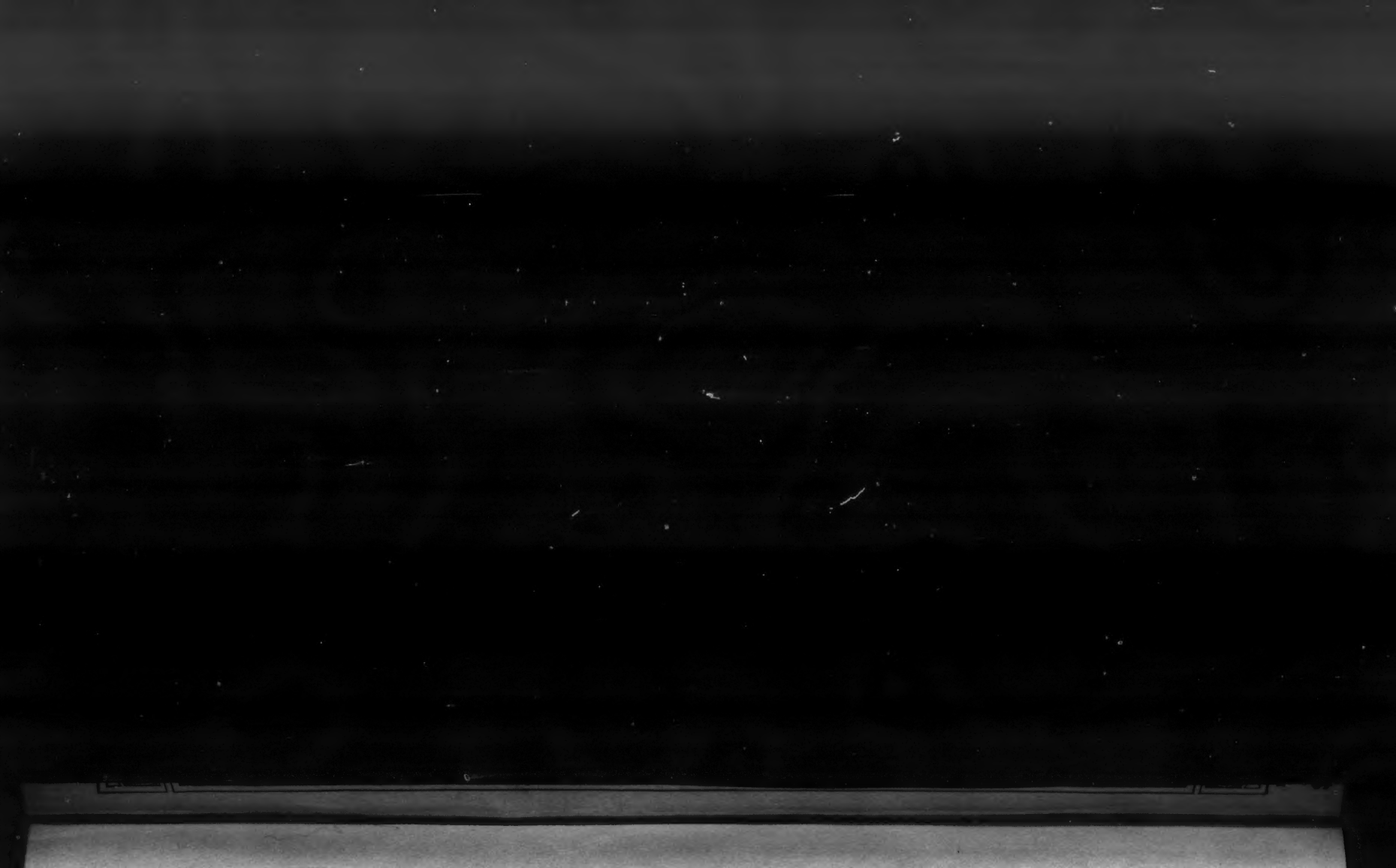
With his usual lack of candour, Mr George made a great parade of the Allies' unanimity. He declared that there was no strong feeling manifest in France against his action. One of his secretaries, acquainted with the French tongue, might have kept him better informed. Not merely does the French Government hold the opinion very strongly that Lenin's gold cannot be used for payment, since it belongs not to the Bolshevist Government but to the creditors of Russia; not merely does it threaten legal action: the French Press also is unanimous in condemning Mr George's cynicism. It cannot understand what is Mr George's aim, and the charitable view to take of the uncertainty is that Mr George does not understand himself. Meanwhile the Entente is put to a severe strain, and it seems possible that Mr George's frivolous temper may alienate the one friend we have in the world. France and Great Britain have been comrades in arms. Their courage and persistence broke the power of Germany, and the one hope of Great Britain as of France is that the two countries will still be knit together in the bonds of friendship. The civilisation of Europe will, in truth, be threatened if we come to loggerheads. Even were the mythical granaries of Russia really on the point of bursting, even were to trade with murderers found exceedingly profitable, it would avail us nothing if, in the process of enriching ourselves, we parted in anger from the French. The one sentiment which we are bound in duty to cherish is the sentiment of solidarity with our neighbours across the Channel. But Mr George, who aspires to the autocracy of Europe, cares as little for the friendship of France as for the good repute of England. He must have Lenin's alliance at all hazards, and when he dies Prinkipo will be found written upon his heart. What hope, then, have we for safety? The fragile hope that there exists one or two honest men in the House of Commons, who will dare, in open rebellion against the Prime Minister, to plead the honourable cause of England.

Mr Ronald Knox's admirable biography of Patrick Shaw-Stewart needs no word of apology. It is but just that the men of high promise, who fell in the war, should live in

the records of their friends. A life cut short prevented Patrick Shaw-Stewart and many another of his kind from proving to the world the force and talent that were in them, and it is a pious duty to rescue them from oblivion. We would not, if we could, turn away from what Mr Knox calls "the imperfect monuments of a generation that died before its time." The more monuments, perfect or imperfect, the better shall we understand what we have lost in the great generation which has been taken from us. And what we value most highly in these plain records, in these collections of familiar letters, is the detachment of mind which they suggest. The men who became soldiers, not because soldiering was their business, but because they were discharging the duty they owed to their country, were no specialists. They needed no maps to explain their movements. As Mr Knox says, "their letters do not speak of advances or of hand-to-hand fighting, but of books, of quiet hours, of welcome rest-camps; they appeal, not for credit or sympathy, but for trivial daily needs, pathetic because trivial—boot-polish and pipe-cleaners and shaving-soap."

Of those who died quietly and without parade none is better worth a record than Patrick Shaw-Stewart. He was, above all, a competent man. If he felt that he had no definite vocation in life, he knew also that few of life's prizes were beyond his reach. He had that serviceable and efficient sort of brain which could be turned to any account. He passed through Eton and Balliol with an air of easy triumph. He won the Newcastle, the Ireland, the Hertford, and capped his career at Oxford by winning a fellowship at All Souls. Truly, as his kindly biographer says, he "was not one of the passengers of his generation." And it is his very distinction which makes the work of portraiture difficult. He was too busy in converting life into a success to express himself in literature. He left no lasting memory of himself in words, as did his friend Julian Grenfell. Whatever lay before him, he took in his stride without fuss and without emphasis. "He had a genius," says Mr Knox, "for relating means to ends, for doing just so much work as was required to gain this scholarship, for making just so much impression as was required to consolidate this acquaintanceship; and his whole life (I think) was mapped out on a plan which involved the acquisition of an assured position in the world before he began to toy with literature, with Movements, with serious politics." In other words, there was a kind of worldliness in Patrick Shaw-Stewart which he shared with very few of his contemporaries. He meant to get on, and not to sacrifice the hope of solid happiness to any forlorn hope of art or letters. His system of life, if rarely

applied, is clearly intelligible. The danger is that, when men have attained an assured position, the impetus "to toy with literature" is weak indeed. Literature is a jealous mistress, apt to punish severely the slights that are put upon her in youth. Alas! it is too late to speculate about what Patrick Shaw-Stewart might have done. It is enough to record that in many fields he accomplished as much as or more than the most of his friends and colleagues.

Moreover, as all those who knew Shaw-Stewart will remember, he purposely put stumbling-blocks in the path of those who would understand him. Mr Knox points out that he had acquired at Eton a habit of writing in a sort of parody of journalese. He did not think he was writing good English when he dealt in long words and stock phrases. He wanted you to know that what he said upon paper he put into inverted commas. And, as Mr Knox adds in a passage of clairvoyance, he was in inverted commas himself. He had a "fierce candour both about himself and about other people which sometimes left his friends aghast. He hated false enthusiasms and sham certainties: an enthymeme, for him, should never do duty for a syllogism. He could not bear that any action of his should be ascribed to a good motive if there were any unworthy motive that had put a grain on the balance of decision." It was consonant with his character, then, that he should take the work that he did in the war lightly and gaily. He never complains or repines. The ready jest is on his tongue; a literary allusion or reminiscence is always at the point of his pen. He found his way about the East with Homer and Herodotus for his guides. He recognised Eumæus when he met him on a Greek island, and belies at every turn the half-contempt which he poured upon his own scholarship as a means of deceiving the examiners. But that, of course, was only a part of his inverted pride. He died in France, fighting with the highest gallantry, and refusing, though wounded, to go back to Battalion H.Q. to be dressed. His life, so far as it went, was rounded and complete; and fortunate in many things, Patrick Shaw-Stewart was fortunate also in finding so profoundly sympathetic and so wisely understanding a biographer as Mr Knox.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.